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THESIS

WOMEN AND THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

by

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June 2000

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The Palestinian women's movement in the Occupied Territories has emerged as an undeniable force on the domestic political scene over the past thirty years. During the Intifada, women seized the opportunity to demonstrate their significance as participants in the struggle for national independence through socio-political organizations that had been developing since the 1970s. Today, these organizations provide a platform from which women address issues beyond those concerned with Palestinian statehood, challenging existing societal norms regarding the rights of women.

Beyond the argument that women comprise roughly half of the world's population, there lies a need for comparative studies of women's movements as a viable political force. The politicization of the gender issue in many developing countries is a cause for great concern. The ability of women as a social group to generate support and potentially impact the political infrastructure has gained attention as a vehicle to induce regime change. I contend that when women are given the opportunity to pursue university education, a generation of well-educated, professional women amasses over time. These women have the ability to generate the strength to sustain a feminist movement in parallel to, yet independent of, a national movement, as evidenced in the Palestinian case.

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WOMEN AND THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Ensign, United States Navy
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
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ABSTRACT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian women's movement in the Occupied Territories has emerged as an undeniable force on the domestic political scene over the past thirty years. During the Intifada, women seized the opportunity to demonstrate their significance as participants in the struggle for national independence through socio-political organizations that had been developing since the 1970s. Today, these organizations provide a platform from which women address issues beyond those concerned solely with Palestinian statehood, challenging existing societal norms regarding the rights of women.

A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary question this thesis seeks to answer is: If and when the Palestinians gain their independence, how will the regime's political composition affect the current women's movement in the new state? A spectrum of possibilities exists, ranging from expansion to suppression or even to termination. In other words, the government could choose to allow women's groups to continue business as usual, pursuing their agendas such as legal reform and political participation with little interference. Conversely, the administration may decide to disband the organizations if they are thought to pose a threat to internal stability and cultural norms. Between these two extremes lies a range of responses, and the one exercised will largely depend on the type of regime instituted in the new state.

In order clarify the process in which to answer the aforementioned question, several supporting questions provide direction. The first is to ask among other Middle Eastern/North African states where a women's movement emerged during or promptly following regime liberalization, does a general pattern exist against which to compare the

Palestinian case? A follow-on question more specifically addresses the impact of the institutionalized political system, the organizational strength of women's socio-political groups, and degree of collective social awareness on the effectiveness of the movement in each case study. By applying the comparative analysis approach, one can use the "lessons learned" in previous cases to seek a better understanding of the Palestinian movement currently underway.

B. RELEVANCE

Beyond the argument that women comprise roughly half of the world's population, there lies a need for comparative studies of women's movements as a viable political force. The politicization of the gender issue in many developing countries is a great cause for concern, especially to the particular regime in question. The ability of women as a social group to generate grassroots support across gender lines and potentially impact the political infrastructure has gained attention as a vehicle to induce regime and cultural change.

The bulk of research that exists on women's movements in the Middle East focuses on specific country studies, treating each as autonomous occurrences. In limiting the scope to a case-by-case basis, one neglects to identify parallels that may be drawn by cross-national comparison. This thesis attempts to take the current research on individual countries and synthesize the variables in an effort to present a coherent understanding of the impact of regime liberalization on women's movements in Middle East/North Africa (MENA) countries.

C. METHODOLOGY

This study is based upon social movement theory and employs a method of comparative analysis to examine similarities that transcend national borders. Using historical examples of women's movements that developed in four MENA countries during periods of regime liberalization, I identify specific variables such as the type of regime in power, the strength and scope of women's groups, and the extent of mass support for the groups' objectives in each case. More specifically, I look at how the institutions of education, labor, and social codes impact the roles of women in their respective states. These variables comprise the foundation for a matrix that I use to develop an accurate forecast for the Palestinian women's movement in the event the Occupied Territories become independent.

I consulted a variety of sources for the production of this work. The primary influence is scholarly analysis found in academic publications such as books, journals, and newspapers. A second source of information includes public opinion polls conducted by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies and the Jerusalem Media and Communications Center. The studies conducted by the Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science also provided valuable statistics. Information from the latter three sources mainly concern the Palestinian case alone.

D. ORGANIZATION

Chapter II provides a brief synopsis of women's movements in four MENA countries. The examples of Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and Jordan form the core upon which the rest of the thesis is founded. The selection of a particular case for use in this

study depended upon the availability of information on the topic as well as its encounter with a distinct instance of regime liberalization.

In Chapter III, the parameters against which to compare and contrast the Palestinian case are set and defined. This framework takes the specific examples of the cases in Chapter II and turns them into a working model of general themes in order to analyze where the women's movement in the Occupied Territories is headed after the establishment of a Palestinian state.

An in-depth discussion on the formation of the Palestinian women's movement is presented in Chapter IV. The bulk of this chapter focuses on the impact of education and labor opportunities preceding the Intifada that allowed women to generate public support and attention during the national struggle. Moving to the post-Oslo period, I also look at how the movement has shifted from pursuing the nationalist agenda to securing a platform devoted primarily to the promotion of women's rights.

Chapter V, based on a synthesis of the previous two chapters, seeks to provide an answer to the primary question of this thesis. A presentation of two likely regime compositions and their implications on the women's movement in a future Palestine are the focus for this section. The conclusion of this chapter revisits the major points of this research. It offers a concise summation of the argument, suggestions for future studies to further understand women's movements in the region, and closing remarks.

E. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Before presenting the case studies, I would will visit the principal tenets of social movement theory and provide a working definition of collective action for this project. Social movement theory offers a general analysis of the dynamic between the political

process and political opportunity structures and clarifies the concept of collective action necessary to conduct my thesis.

Sociologists John McAdam, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald begin their collective work entitled *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* with what they feel are key characteristics to identifying the extent to which a social movement will be successful. The qualities are categorized as political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes. Scholars tend to focus their research on one area; before expanding each concept, however, it is important to note that these variables are interactive rather than independent and may serve to enhance one another. Furthermore, social movements may largely emerge as a result of the political and social environment, but "their fate is heavily shaped by their own actions" (McAdam, 1996, p.15).

The first aspect is that of political opportunities. They are understood in terms of the institutionalized political system, the stability of elite alignments and the state's capacity for repression (McAdam, 1996, p.10). It asks the question, "How much power does the current regime possess?" and measures the extent to which there may be an opening for a movement to survive. Most research in this area has sought to show how changes in some aspect of a political system created new prospects for collective action, focusing on expanding political opportunities in facilitating the emergence of a single movement (McAdam, 1996, p. 17). In several of my case studies, an emerging national movement was the vehicle to explore an expansion of women's rights and responsibilities in society. Unfortunately, as evidenced in Algeria, once the national movement successfully gained independence from the colonizing power of France, it largely ignored the women's issues it had promised to protect.

Although paying close attention to opportunities, this variable is just as much affected by political constraints. The ability to deny a movement room to mobilize becomes a critical weapon for the regime in power in that it may successfully restrict the opposition's strength. In the case of Tunisia, the Bourguiba regime incorporated women's issues into the character of the government. Instituting dramatic reforms such as the prohibition of polygamy (the only MENA country to have such a policy), Bourguiba was able to take charge of a feminist movement, leaving Tunisian women with little choice but to let him lead their "movement."

Mobilizing structures form the second category of their discussion. According to the authors, mobilizing structures are those collective vehicles through which people mobilize and engage in collective action (McAdam, 1996, p. 4). They are not solely formal, but may also be informal organizations. For example, the development of women's charitable associations Egypt and Jordan served as informal venues for women to interact with one another. In the formative stages, the primary concern is whether mobilizing structures exist with enough strength to begin a sustained movement against the regime (McAdam, 1996, p. 13). The women's committees in the Occupied Territories during the Intifada were able to introduce a nationalist ideology to middle- and lower-class Palestinians through social work programs in labor, health and education. Once it starts to gain momentum, leaders must shift their focus from amassing general support to effectively representing the voices of all sections of society participating in their movement. Whether it began as an established institution or in an informal setting, the change in approach is a necessary part of maintaining the energy of collective action (McAdam, 1996, p. 13). Continuing to influence a large portion of society under the

framework of social committees, the Palestinian women's organizations successfully amassed broad-based support for the national struggle.

"Mediating between opportunity, organization, and action are shared meanings and definitions that people bring to their situation" (McAdam, 1996, p. 5). This is the final characteristic of their synthesis, known as framing processes. Framing processes allow people with similar objections to identify with one another and express their independent grievances collectively (McAdam, 1996, p. 5). They need to feel that in acting together, they can redress a common problem. Specifically applied to this thesis, women in MENA countries function under a patriarchal social system. Through the framing process of education, they are exposed to ideas that cause them to question their status in the existing framework. A particular movement seeks to strategically frame its efforts by focusing on the similarities of the aggrieved and the differences they have from the "oppressor." The cultural impact of this tactic is that it allows a movement to reshape the terms of public discourse (McAdam, 1996, p. 19). This aspect of theory is easily fulfilled for women's movements since their identified "oppressor" is the patriarchal social system.

Further clarifying the aforementioned work is another prominent scholar on social movement theory. Sidney Tarrow's work, *Power in Movement*, emphasizes the rise and fall of social movements as part of a political struggle as well as the outcome of changes in political opportunity structure, state strategy, and transnational diffusion. He clearly distinguishes between the concepts of contentious politics and social movements. The difference lies in the strength and longevity of collective action. In Tarrow's words,

> Contentious politics occurs when ordinary people, often in league with more influential citizens, join forces in confrontations with elites,

> authorities, and opponents. But mounting, coordinating, and sustaining them against powerful opponents are the unique contribution of a social movement—an invention of the modern age and an accompaniment to the rise of the modern state (Tarrow, 1998, p. 2).

An example of contentious politics for this study is found in the case of Algeria, where women attached feminist aims to the broader social movement of the nationalists led by men. After achieving independence and gaining freedom from the French, women's issues were then largely ignored. Without a consolidated platform to voice their frustrations and concerns, women lacked the strength to contend with the new regime. The women's movement in Algeria reflected contentious politics, whereas the nationalist struggle was a true social movement.

Social movements do not depend solely on framing. As previously noted in McAdam's discussion of mobilizing structures, Tarrow also points out that a movement must bring people together, shape coalitions, confront opponents, and "assure their own future after the exhilaration of the peak of mobilization has passed" (Tarrow, 1998, p. 123). He does not dismiss the importance of framing processes, however. A movement can be organized around strong ties of collective identity, whether real or constructed, but it cannot do the work of mobilization. This aspect depends on *framing those identities* so that they will lead to action, alliances, and interaction (Tarrow, 1998, p. 199).

In addressing the category of political opportunities, Tarrow believes that social movements are not produced merely as a result of a political opening. The progression is more complex. Instead, he suggests using political opportunities as evidence for when contentious politics will emerge, setting in motion "a chain of causation that may ultimately lead to sustained interaction with authorities and thence to social movements" (Tarrow, 1998, p. 20). Furthermore, a social movement will rise out of contentious

politics only when it taps into social networks and connective structures, producing collective action frames and identities able to sustain their struggle with powerful opponents (Tarrow, 1998, p. 23). This is evidenced by the upperclass charitable organizations that exist only to accommodate a philanthropic need, unlike a true feminist movement which seeks to mobilize middle- and lower-class women to the common cause of women's rights.

With this background, it is fitting to provide a working definition of collective action for the study. Collective action is a coordinated effort to maintain contention against an instituted regime for a common purpose. Based on political opportunity, mobilizing processes and framing structures, collective action gives a movement strength and momentum. In short, Tarrow finds:

> Regarding the outcomes of social movements, the important point is that, although movements usually conceive of themselves as outside of and opposed to institutions, acting collectively inserts them into complex policy networks, and thus within the reach of the state (Tarrow, 1998, p. 5).

Thus, the ultimate objective for a movement is to be identified by the state as a potential force for disruption, necessitating the regime to give attention to its demands. Whether those demands are met or not is determined by the breadth and depth of collective action.

The examination of women's movements fits within the framework of social movement theory. Mobilizing structures include socio-political organizations based on advancing women's issues. Another example would be the expansion of educational opportunities for women in a particular country. Framing processes emerge within the natural dichotomy between men and women. When women are able to consolidate and vent their frustration at their subjection to a patriarchal system, the foundation for a women's social movement is built.

Social movement theory is also expanding its discussion to examine the aforementioned concepts as they apply transnationally. This strengthens my approach to analyze and compare the women's movements in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and Jordan not as autonomous entities, but possibly as part of a universal framework that can be applied to other countries to accurately predict outcomes of women's collective action in the Middle East.

II. CASE STUDIES: EGYPT, ALGERIA, TUNISIA, AND JORDAN

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief description of the development of women's movements in four MENA countries. By examining these cases, I will show that the incorporation of women in the educational system, particularly at the university level, generates the foundation of women to begin a bona fide movement with the cause of raising feminist issues such as amendments to marriage and divorce laws. This development alone, however, is not sufficient to bring about changes on behalf of women. The other aspect necessary to facilitate the emergence of a women's movement is the political and social environment. In several cases, women attached their cause to a greater, nationalist cause only to find themselves marginalized from the political scene once national independence was achieved. I argue that only when a consolidated women's movement emerges under the leadership of a well-educated professional class will it be able to possibly withstand co-optation by the regime and disassociate its agenda from the nationalist cause.

I selected each case according to several criteria. The most evident was that it had to be a country in the region. It was also necessary for the country to have a developing women's movement of some form. Another stipulation for inclusion was the evidence of regime liberalization. For the purposes of this paper, regime liberalization is understood as a degree of change within the existing political structure. This could vary from one extreme—revolution and decolonization in Algeria—to the other, namely the limited opening under the Hussein regime in Jordan to allow parliamentary elections as well as the formation of political parties. The variation of cases, particularly with respect to regime liberalization, permitted me to observe a general pattern of development regarding

women's movements among the countries. I was able to identify slight variations in each country that may allow a better understanding of how the movements form and generate support in a broad context that overrides the intricacies of a specific country.

These case studies are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to provide a baseline familiarity with the aims as well as obstacles facing the mobilization of women in the region. Each country's section opens with a short historical background in order to put the movement into context. The remaining work focuses on variables with social movement theory in mind: the educational opportunities afforded women, the development of women's socio-political organizations, and the application of social legislation in each country.

An anticipated criticism of this study is the question of time, especially since the case studies range from Egypt in early 1900s to Jordan in the late 1980s. One may argue that the women's movement in Algeria during the 1950s would have little to offer in the form of projecting a viable Palestinian scenario in the 21st century. How can these compare when a generational difference is readily apparent, not to mention that the effects of Western influence and technology have greater impact as time goes on? Although a valid critique, I would respond that regime liberalization, while considerate of time, does not necessarily factor it as a constraint. Moreover, after presenting my cases, a clearer understanding of the dynamics that affect women's movements unfolds, and one will see that it is the coming together of political opportunities and mobilizing structures that affects this process irrespective of time. Time is one factor to keep in mind, but the synthesis of other variables transcends temporal considerations.

A. EGYPT

The beginnings of a women's movement in Egypt are usually traced to the early 1900s. Politically, Egypt was trying to wrest free from British intervention, during which time an Egyptian nationalism began to emerge. In this context of associating nationalism with social reform, men originated as the supporters of reforming Egyptian society, thereby promoting an improved status for women. The link between the status of women and the political state of the country thus became a recurring theme in Egyptian history (Smock, 1977, p. 42). Although one finds in this time frame well-known figures such as Huda Sha'rawi, it was not until the rise of the Nasser regime that a broad-based women's movement came onto the scene. As best put by Cynthia Nelson:

> Women's active participation in the political life of Egypt has a long history. Most contemporary scholars associate the beginnings of an authentic Egyptian women's movement with the 1919 revolution...The period 1945-59 [was when] the women's movement came of age in the sense that it experienced a diversification in ideology, tactics, and goals; and it began to transcend its elitist origins and membership. Moreover, during this period, the women's movement consciously shifted away from being a welfare-oriented, mostly philanthropic activity, to a more politicized movement that linked the struggle for women's full participation in the decision-making processes to such political and social concerns as the nationalist movement and class struggle (Nelson, 1991, p. 314).

Nelson's observation of the emergence of an enlightened women's movement during the 1950s runs concurrent with regime liberalization in the form of the rise of the Free Officers to political power, a critical development when later compared to the Palestinian case.

1. Education

During the nineteenth century, Egypt began a broad modernization program under Mohammed Ali, who had ended the French occupation and asserted de facto separation

from the Ottoman Empire. Along with plans to raise a strong army, other aspects of society experienced modern "improvements": the economy, health, and especially important for women, education (Badran, 1995, p. 6). Previously, under colonization, women were not provided access to higher education through the state. They could pursue it only in private or foreign institutions, primarily in France or England (Smock, 1977, p. 42). One can infer from this fact that only middle- and upper-class families could afford such a luxury.

The earliest state-sponsored schools that allowed women to attend date back to 1832. Mohammed Ali founded a vocational school for the training of female midwives, but initially the school was only able to attract girls from orphanages and poor families (Smock, 1977, p. 41). Egyptian families had resisted sending their daughters for several reasons, but the prevailing sentiment was that the institution was not credible and would reflect poorly on the family honor (Badran, 1995, p. 9). The school eventually earned respect and enrollment increased. In 1889 the government took another step and created the Saniyah School, which after the turn of the century instituted a teachers' training program (Badran, 1995, p. 9). This facilitated the process of using female instructors to educate women, further widening society's acceptability of schooling for its girls.

The formal recognition of the right of women to receive an education came in the Constitution of 1923, which included Article 19, a provision that called for all Egyptian children aged six to twelve to receive, at a minimum, elementary education (Smock, 1977, p. 41). Although this law was never enforced and female education remained a very sporadic practice at this time, it did prompt the construction of additional primary schools. Egypt's present system of education dates from the rise of the Free Officers in

1952. From this point, education was made compulsory for all children regardless of gender from six through twelve years of age (Smock, 1977, p. 51).

Following the provisions provided in the Constitution of 1923, opportunities for advanced education were soon opened to women. The first females were admitted to Cairo University beginning in 1929. These graduates left in 1933 with degrees in the arts. Gradually, many other programs were cleared for women's participation, including medicine, law, commerce, engineering, and agronomy (Smock, 1977, p. 42). By 1952, on the eve of the Nasserite revolution, 4,033 Egyptian women had received university degrees (Smock, 1977, p. 42). Middle-class women's lives were most changed by expanding opportunities for formal education. No longer a luxury for the elite of society, women of lower social status were able to attend college because it was both affordable and closer to home.

A major breakthrough for all Egyptians was Article Eight of the 1964 Constitution that declared, "The State guarantees equality of opportunities to all Egyptians" (Badran, 1991, p. 218). This was translated into free university education, with a guaranteed job available for every graduate. Women's literacy soared and even greater numbers of women graduated from university and entered the labor force (Badran, 1991, p. 218). During the 1960s and 1970s the numbers of women university graduates continued to increase with a concomitant rise in their entry into various sectors of the labor force, especially in the technical sectors (Badran, 1991, p. 219). In like fashion of opening Cairo University to women in 1929, the education and work opportunities created after 1952 took large numbers of women from middle- and lower-

class rural families and elevated them to an equal status with the upperclass educated and employed.

An outgrowth of increased education for women was their gains in the sphere of employment. Women found job opportunities mainly in those areas that corresponded with the immediate priorities of the state, such as education and medicine. These were fields in which women professionals typically served the needs of other women (Badran, 1991, p. 208). In this way, although the Egyptian educational system theoretically provided equality of opportunity for Egyptian girls, it was not prepared to grant women an all-encompassing role in society (Smock, 1977, p. 51).

2. Socio-Political Organizations

In response to the growing nationalistic sentiment, women began to support social reform in the public arena. Their first active participation in public life came during the 1919 uprisings in Egypt that sought to expel the British. Women demonstrated in strikes and, although unsuccessful in achieving the goal of dislodging the British, announced their arrival as a legitimate social force (Smock, 1977, p. 42). They did not, however, have structures in place to form an independent movement from the men, nor did they find it necessary at the time. Unfortunately, women were dismissed by the very men who had previously used nationalism to promote social reform and generate mass support for their platform. They felt betrayed by men who were not prepared to implement their promise to integrate women into public life after Egyptian political independence in 1922 (Badran, 1991, p. 207).

Active feminism in Egypt began in the same year, when Huda Sha'rawi founded the Arab Feminist Union (AFU). Affiliated with the International Alliance for Women's

Suffrage, the AFU sought to extend voting rights to Arab women (Smock, 1977, p. 42). Within the scope of the AFU, Sha'rawi created an exclusive Egyptian branch in 1923, the Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU). It was at this point that feminism focused a broad agenda of claims for political, social, economic, and legal rights, with initial priority given to women's education and the reform of personal status laws (Badran, 1991, p. 208). The EFU expanded the goals of its parent AFU to include a program aimed at raising the intellectual and social standards of Egyptian women to ready them for full participation in national life (Smock, 1977, p.43). They demanded free access to all schools of higher education for women and reform of the marriage and divorce laws. Recalling that the state did not implement free university education until 1964, these women were laying the groundwork for future improvements. Many scholars, however, are quick to point out that activity during this time should not be overestimated. Audrey Smock notes:

> The very women who could provide the leadership for a feminist movement, those with education and high social standing, generally have little inclination to do so because they suffer the fewest disabilities under the present system. Elite women dominate women's voluntary associations, most of which are exclusively social welfare in their orientation. Others, like the Cairo Women's Club, resemble the sophisticated clubs of leisured society women found elsewhere in the world (Smock, 1977, p. 72).

The EFU appealed to a small group of well-educated women who had been exposed to Western culture, whereas the vast majority of Egyptian women were secluded from such ideals. They remained outside EFU participation and were not even aware that the Union existed for their "interests" (Smock, 1977, p. 43).

It did not take long for factionalization to threaten the solidarity of the emerging women's movement. In 1935, Zainab Al Ghazali joined the EFU. Dissatisfied with the

group, she formed the Muslim Women's Society (MWS), stating that "the Egyptian Feminist Union wanted to establish the civilization of the Western women in Egypt and the rest of the Arab and Islamic worlds" (Badran, 1991, p. 210). Herein lies the beginning of a competing discourse between secular and religious feminists in Egypt that continues today. As put by Margot Badran:

> While the EFU women found their feminist ideology and program compatible with Islam and sought its legitimizing force, their overall ideological framework was secular rather than religious. For Al Ghazali and the MWS on the other hand, since the Shari'a regulates all aspects of life, a separate ideology of feminism was an undermining Western ideology (Badran, 1991, p. 210).

Toward the end of the 1930s and 1940s, feminism in Egypt started to expand its objectives to reach the lower classes, resulting in an abundance of new organizations (Badran, 1991, p. 211). Using the EFU as a springboard, former members founded the National Feminist Party (NFP) in 1944 and The Daughter of the Nile Union (DNU) in 1948. Both the NFP and the DNU mounted literacy and hygiene campaigns among the poor. They also expressed concern with family law reform, education, and work rights for women (Badran, 1991, p. 212). Although noteworthy in their own right, women's organizations remained as charitable groups that assisted the lower class rather than incorporating them as members.

The state, in conjunction with the official religious establishment, came down firmly against the political rights of women during the 1950s and the rise of the Free Officers under Nasser. Effecting a ban on feminist organizations, the regime dismantled the EFU, allowing a small branch of it to continue with a purely social focus. Conservative Islamist scholars and thinkers were tolerated, but radical Islam as well as feminist discourse outside the scope of government regulation was suppressed.

New laws forbade the formation of women's political organizations, and complete suppression of the movement was achieved by 1959 (Badran, 1991, p. 217). Nevertheless, feminist organizations continued their activism, even when forced underground. Using voluntary associations of mixed gender as a vehicle, women were able to sustain their contacts. According to a Ministry of Social Affairs Survey, in 1960 there were 3,195 voluntary associations with some 700,000 members, of whom eight percent were women (Smock, 1977, p. 68).

3. Political Rights and Personal Status Laws

The EFU played a pivotal role in effecting change in the political arena. In 1924 it achieved a breakthrough by successfully petitioning the government to raise the minimum marriage age to sixteen for girls and eighteen for boys (Badran, 1991, p. 208). EFU efforts were simultaneously rewarded and suppressed in 1956. The state granted women the right to vote, but at the same time the government imposed measures that effectively dismantled the EFU and its politically challenging platform (Badran, 1991, p. 217).

The principle of equality between the sexes had been written into the 1923 Constitution and followed up in the National Charter, with implications for personal status laws. As one might suspect, the government was reluctant to assume the responsibilities of fulfilling these pledges because of their disruptive potential to the existing social order (Smock, 1977, p. 69). Reform of the personal status law provisions on divorce, marriage, and inheritance would promote women's rights, but was considered by many Egyptians a direct assault on Islam (Smock, 1977, p. 69).

To illustrate this point, in 1958 the Egyptian government appointed a committee to review the standing personal status laws and forward suggestions for change. The committee submitted proposals to make polygamy illegal, raise the marriage age, and amend divorce laws. When a draft law was published in 1966, its components were much weaker than the initial suggestions: polygamy was not eliminated. Divorce would be settled in court, but the father would gain custody of the children even if the mother was favored for the separation (Smock, 1977, p. 71). This instance reveals the unwillingness of the government to challenge pressure from the conservative elements of the population.

B. ALGERIA

When compared to Egypt and the other countries of this study, the Algerian case differs significantly in that a women's movement failed to coalesce into a platform from which to challenge the government for social equality. An explanation for this absence can be found in the colonization practices employed by the French from 1830 until Algeria won its independence in 1962. In contrast to their colonial policy in Morocco after 1912 and Tunisia after 1882, the French made an attempt to completely restructure Algerian society. It sought to dismantle Islam and its practices, reorganize the economic infrastructure, and impose a cultural network of French lodges and schools (Moghadam, 1993, p. 62). In short, France wanted to annex Algeria as its "fifth province."

As a result of the occupation of their country, Algerians experienced a sense of disorientation, disarray, and disorder (Lazreg, 1994, p. 51). The French had two options in their approach to the settlement of Algeria. First, they could contain it by creating special institutions to manage it, as was the custom in its colonization of Morocco or

Tunisia. The second alternative was to neutralize it by introducing laws and practices that destroyed its foundations. Colonial authorities in Algeria chose to do both (Lazreg, 1994, p. 38). Not surprisingly, many Algerians came to regard Islam and the Muslim family law as sanctuaries from French cultural imperialism (Moghadam, 1993, p. 62).

The Algerian revolution and decolonization from the French lasted six years, from 1954 to 1962. During the war of independence, women became a valuable force multiplier on the battlefield for the Algerians. Military exigencies forced the officers of the Armée de Liberation Nationale (ALN) to allow women to participate as part of its organization. Upwards of 10,000 women were recorded as having participated in the Algerian Revolution, with thousands more not offically accounted for. (Moghadam, 1993, p. 62). The overwhelming majority of those who served in the war performed traditional functions such as nurses, cooks, and laundresses. But many women played an essential role as couriers, and because the French rarely searched them, women were often used to transport bombs. A select few women were even combatants. On all social levels, women proved themselves to be an indispensable asset to the overall strength of the nationalist movement.

Many women assumed that in the process of contributing significantly to the success of the revolution, their efforts would be appropriately recognized in shaping the agenda of the new state, particularly with respect to women's issues. Unfortunately, the country's independence did not signify the emancipation of women (Moghadam, 1993, p. 65). After gaining control of the state in 1962, the nationalist movement neglected to grant women a place in domestic politics. The use of women as ideological subjects during the revolution did not allow for "the creation of a social space that could have

enabled them to enter debates over their status in their society as well as the impact of colonial rule on their lives" (Lazreg, 1994, p. 87).

1. Education

Under French rule, educational institutions and opportunities were uneven and varied from one Algerian district to the next. However, the most challenging aspect of the education system with respect to women was neither a lack of space nor funding; it was French ideology. From the colonizer's perspective, the education of native girls seemed unnecessary and therefore not placed as a high priority on the French agenda (Lazreg, 1994, p. 66).

To put the sentiment in empirical terms, between 1840 and 1949 the French had opened 138 grade schools for boys. During the same time period, merely eleven girls' schools were established (Lazreg, 1994, p. 88). Enrollment at this time is unsurprisingly low. By 1951 there were only 6,696 girls in grade school, making women's participation more symbolic than real. Furthermore, the number of women who were eligible to attend high school and college decreased dramatically. In the same year, 1,014 girls went to high school and only 51 women studied at the university level. Without strong numbers of women afforded the opportunity of advanced education, little could be done to foster a collective sentiment of feminist issues on the national level, thereby forcing women to remained silent on the eve of the revolution. Marnia Lazreg explains this silence as a reflection of women's structural marginalization by the colonizer's society. The French had successfully paralyzed the development of any strain of a women's movement simply by restricting their access to education (Lazreg, 1994, p. 96).

Those girls who were exposed to French schooling received a limited curriculum when compared to that of the boys. Although boys were taught to be "docile, submissive, and good subjects," these qualities were to be achieved through mastery of the French language, arithmetic, geography, history, and religion (Lazreg, 1994, p. 75). Girls were exposed to French grammar, arithmetic, and geography, but did not receive any courses in history (Lazreg, 1994, p. 69). The education of Algerian women focused on sewing and needlework as hobbies to help them avoid boredom and occupy their minds (Lazreg, 1994, p. 75). As a result, the average Algerian girl could not hope for a transformation of her life through higher learning, and education was not presented in a way to even cultivate such a thought (Lazreg, 1994, p. 78).

2. Socio-Political Organizations

There is little to be said on development of women's organizations during or immediately following the Algerian revolution for the basic reason that women had not foreseen this window of opportunity. Lacking a class of university-educated, professional women to advance a feminist agenda as well as associating their emancipation with freedom from French occupation, Algerian women entrusted men of the nationalist movement to forge gains on their behalf. Lazreg affirms this position by pointing to structurally-induced measures during colonization that marginalized women from the domestic political scene. The fact that no women voiced opinions about Algerian culture and institutions leads one to question what caused this silence. It is a logical conclusion that their reticence was probably not self-imposed for a strategic purpose, but rather as a result of an absence of a platform upon which women could express their concerns (Lazreg, 1994, p. 78).

An illustration of their marginality is found in the failure of women to stimulate Algerian public discussion of feminist issues. Specific examples include the expansion of women's roles in society and the promotion of women's rights on par with men within the tenets of Islam (Lazreg, 1994, p. 86). The nationalist goal to instill Algerians with a sense of pride in their identity did not extend as far as to include women as full-fledged members of their society. Instead, the nationalists preserved Algeria's patriarchal structure in order to discourage any potential threats to their power base vis-à-vis an independent women's movement.

3. Political Rights and Personal Status Laws

In the waning years of the revolution, the French began to manipulate gender issues in an effort to preserve itself as the legitimate power in Algeria. Colonial authorities sought to implement personal status laws as a means to gain the favor and support of Algerian women for a continued occupation, but their efforts were seen as too little, too late (Lazreg, 1994, p. 90). Nevertheless, the French promulgated laws pertaining to marriage in a February 1959 ordinance as well as a September 1959 public decree. Provisions of these documents prohibited marriage at an early age and made consent of spouses the sole requirement of marriages. A woman no longer needed a guardian's permission to marry, a significant change in social policy and seen as a direct blow to the religious establishment (Lazreg, 1994, p. 90). The timing of the law most likely prevented it from having a positive and lasting impression on Algerian society. The country had been entrenched in seven years of war and was merely three years away from independence. Had it appeared at the turn of the century, Lazreg feels that the law would have made a greater impact on women's lives (Lazreg, 1994, p. 91).

Although a women's movement did not take shape during the revolution, feminist issues were not completely ignored. After independence, for example, the September 1962 constitution guaranteed equality between the sexes and granted women the right to vote. Ten women were even elected deputies of the new National Assembly after independence (Moghadam, 1993, p. 65).

The French provisions on marriage remained part of Algerian law until the 1980s, although widespread awareness did not permeate throughout society. Islamist efforts to reverse these statutes were finally rewarded in the passage of the 1984 Family Code. Instead of progressing or broadening women's liberation, the Code did away with many of the reforms of 1959. The Islamists celebrated this victory, which provided them an institutionalized justification to promote inequality between women and men in family matters (Lazreg, 1994, p. 91).

C. TUNISIA

After gaining its independence from France in 1956, Tunisia entered a period of modernization under the leadership of Habib Bourguiba. Prior to entering office, Bourguiba was backed by the Parti Socialiste Destourien (PSD), which in turn became the official state party. The 1959 national constitution officially established Tunisia as a republic and delineated the responsibilities of the president in the areas of legislative as well as executive matters (Micaud, 1964, p. 94). During his first year as president, however, Bourguiba launched significant societal reforms on his own initiative and without consultation of the Constituent Assembly (Micaud, 1964, p. 94). This set the stage for the authoritarian nature of Tunisian politics over the next thirty years, until Bourguiba retired from office.

Tunisian socialists had strongly advocated female emancipation prior to Tunisian independence, recognizing it as a necessary step toward modernization. The nationalists, on the other hand, hedged on this issue and were satisfied to give women cursory consideration in the form of increased female education. (Micaud, 1964, p. 50) In this respect, women were fortunate to have inherited the socialist nature of the Bourguiba regime. Nonetheless, it did not foster an independent women's movement; instead, women's issues were identified and commanded by the government. Bourguiba's intent was to bring under state control all forms of civil society organization, including the feminist movement, which he accomplished quite successfully (Brand, 1998, p. 179).

As the "Liberator of Tunisian Women," Bourguiba prided himself as having spared Tunisian women from struggling with feminist issues on their own. But although he emancipated them through social legislation, he simultaneously established his control over the future ability for women to organize. Bourguiba not only championed the women's movement, he politicized issues of gender and challenged the authority of the religious establishment in matters of social regulation. Brand comments that:

> issues related to women became the lightening rod in attacks against and defenses of laicism in general. This made women the first natural line of defense as well as the first likely victims in any challenge to the state by the Islamists (Brand, 1998, p. 181).

True to this statement, at the height of Islamist strength in the form of a consolidated movement during the 1980s, the social reforms promulgated by Bourguiba in the early years of his tenure were the first to undergo criticisms from the conservative elements contending for power. Nevertheless, the laws still stand today.

1. Education

Bourguiba viewed education as the cornerstone of his modernization program. The extra attention given to provide widespread schooling in Tunisia resulted in tremendous benefits for women. In general, school enrollment doubled every five years in the first two decades since independence. A ten-year education program launched in 1958 aimed to achieve universal primary education by 1969. Not excluded from the program, the enrollment of girls increases rapidly and exponentially: in 1940, there were 6,000 girls attending school; 70,000 were recorded at the time of independence in 1956; and by 1961, the number neared 200,000 (Micaud, 1964, p. 149).

Furthermore, the government expected the number of students in secondary schools and universities to quadruple from 1959 to 1969 (Micaud, 1964, p. 158). The Bourguiba administration foresaw the expansion of a secondary education an investment toward large-scale returns on the economic future of Tunisia and therefore a necessary sector to develop. In addition to the state's increased focus on advanced schooling, the popular response among Tunisians was also positive. Micaud notes that parents were eager to send their children to school and wanted them to pass the exams necessary to enable them study on the secondary level (Micaud, 1964, p. 157).

The University of Tunis was founded in 1960 as a replacement for the French-inspired Institut des Hautes Etudes, in Tunis since 1945 (Micaud, 1964, p. 155). Women were accepted as students from its inception. Of the 40,000 students enrolled in the University of Tunis in 1984, women comprised about forty percent of the student population (Nelson, 1986, p. 248).

It is important not to overestimate the impact of Bourguiba's reforms on women. Education was seen as central to modernization, but was not to interfere with a woman's primary role in the home (Brand, 1998, p. 205). Moreover, the conservative concern with the expanding rights and responsibilities of women in the academic realm began to creep back into public discussion from a cabinet-level representatives. During the discussion of the 1990 budget, for example, deputies of the Ministry of Higher Education argued that the increasing feminization of the educational structure was significantly hurting standards (Brand, 1998, p. 195).

2. Socio-Political Organizations*

The Union Musulmane des Femmes de Tunisie (UMFT) is recognized as the first formal women's organization in Tunisia. It was established in 1936 and focused its attention on expanding educational opportunities to women. Shortly thereafter, the members of the Tunisian Communist Party founded the Union des Femmes de Tunisie (UFT). Its agenda centered on social issues and labor organizing. The UFT also voiced its support for the anti-colonial struggle. Despite its activities, the UFT remained a marginal organization for two reasons: its founders were primarily European, and its members espoused communism. The national movement itself devoted little attention to women's issues, with the prevailing sentiment that pursuance of their rights would be more appropriate after liberation.

Immediately upon taking office, Bourguiba put in place a sweeping, centralized state apparatus in the form of a large bureaucracy. The PSD was the only political party

* The majority of the material presented in this section is drawn from Laurie Brand's work, *Women, the State, and Political Liberalization: Middle Eastern and North African Experiences, 1998.* Unless otherwise indicated, the information taken from her argument is found on pages 177-222.

authorized to exist, and subordinate organizations were required to report to it. Women's associations were no exception. Nearly all of the organizations depended on state for funding, drew their leadership from the ranks of the PSD, and were subject to strict government review and intervention.

Bourguiba's efforts to channel popular political participation through a vast state-controlled network extended to the women's movement. The 1956 establishment of the Union Nationale des Femmes de Tunisie (UNFT) was created in this spirit. It aimed to provide instruction to women in a variety of areas, including literacy, family planning, and sewing (Nelson, 1986, p. 249). Following the formation of the UNFT, the UFT was given the option to integrate with it. No longer authorized by the government to exist independently, many UFT members chose to join the UNFT. Those who resisted were driven underground, and the UFT was completely dissolved by 1963.

While the UNFT regularly forwarded reports on women's issues to the regime, it rarely initiated proposals for substantive changes. The UNFT was controlled by a core of women who were staunch PSD members and kept in close contact with Bourguiba. These women ensured that the UNFT implemented policy passed down by the state and did little to stir the existing order.

One of the negative consequences of the closely-tied UNFT affiliation to the state was that the leadership became a puppet in the hands of the regime. One promising exception came with the UNFT presidency of 1973 with Fathia Mzali, a PSD party activist and wife of then-Minister of Education Mohammed Mzali. Although she met the criteria to lead the UNFT, Mzali initiated a discourse on the function of the group, stating in 1978 that "we still don't know if the UNFT is supposed to be primarily involved in

politics or economics, if it is supposed to defend the rights of women or if it should devote itself solely to social work" (As cited in Brand, 1998, p. 220). Using this as an opportunity to expand its work, the UNFT wanted to dedicated one segment of its energies solely to women's interests. However, when Mzali was also appointed the first minister of a new cabinet branch named "Family and Promotion of Women," the UNFT initiatives stagnated. She continued on as president of the UNFT, and the separation between the state and the organization became even more blurred, creating a conflict of interests for the women's group.

At around the same time of Mzali accepted the ministerial position, an autonomous women's movement began to form. Comprised of educators and intellectuals, the Club d'Etudes de la Condition des Femmes (CECF) was an organization started in 1978 independently of the regime. The CECF challenged the UNFT, and in turn, the state. A prime example of the CECF's agenda occurred when its members organized a meeting outside of Tunis to provide an open forum on women's issues. They sought to facilitate a discussion of women's issues despite the recognition of formal social rights and without intimidation from the Bourguiba regime. Shortly after its formation, the CECF split over the issue of whether or not to present draft changes of Code de Statut Personnel, a decision that was never resolved and caused internal breakdown of the group.

3. Political Rights and Personal Status Laws

Legislation was the primary instrument for the president to effect change. While centralizing women's activity under one organization, Bourguiba presented a series of laws aimed at upgrading women's status on the social scene. Brand stresses that his

policies on women were only one part of a broader strategy by which he sought to set Tunisia on the road to modernization (Brand, 1998, p. 204). The earliest and most dramatic change in family law occurred in Tunisia in 1957, when Bourguiba introduced the Code du Statut Personnel (CSP). With the CSP, Bourguiba took a bold step, promoting significant change while continuing to maintain authority and control of the state.

The CSP regulated four central women's issues, effectively ending religious jurisdiction. First, women were granted the right to consent to marriage. No longer forced against her will, this provision transformed marriage from an agreement between two families to a contract based on the mutual consent of two individuals (Micaud, 1964, p. 147). Next, it set the minimum marriage age to twenty for men and seventeen for women. Couples who wanted to marry at an earlier age were required to obtain special civil court authorization. Third, polygamy was outlawed, and considered a crime punishable by a fine and imprisonment. Tunisia remains the only Arab state with this law officially on record. Finally, divorce would be administered by the civil courts. The CSP identified separate types of divorce: mutually consented or initiated by one spouse. In either case, it required an attempt at reconciliation, and divorce was final only through a judicial decision delivered by the courts (Brand, 1998, p. 208).

The personal status code replaced Quranic law with a unified legal system for all Tunisians. Bourguiba carefully framed these changes within a "modernist" presentation of religion, but the Islamists were marginalized as a result (Brand, 1998, p. 178). From their viewpoint, shifts in social regulation weakened control of women through the family, the central unit in the construction of Islamist society. Furthermore, the code was

seen as an assault on the only area of law in which Islamic precepts had previously prevailed (Brand, 1998, p.180).

D. JORDAN

For nearly fifty years, King Hussein reigned as Jordan's leader. From 1953 until his death in 1999, Hussein effectively was the state. His tenure, however, was not without its difficulties. One important instance in terms of the Jordanian women's movement was the political liberalization policies that were instituted in the late 1980s to quell an explosive discontent with austere economic measures. The parliamentary elections of 1989 would serve as a vehicle for women to enter the political arena, but intervention of royalty has ultimately stagnated the women's movement in Jordan.

1. Education

Education in Jordan became compulsory with the promulgation of the amended 1952 constitution, which called for nine years of schooling for its youth. In practice, however, there is no strict enforcement of attendance; the decision about a child's education is left to the family, usually the patriarch. He may or may not see the advantage of educating a daughter, particularly not if she contributes an economic purpose in the home. The proximity of institutions is another consideration. Since many villages do not maintain school facilities, families are unwilling or unable to afford sending their daughters away for education (Brand, 1998, p. 130).

In 1921, when the Emirate of Jordan was established, educational facilities consisted of twenty-five religious schools that provided a rather limited curriculum. After the creation of Jordan as an independent state, emphasis on education intensified. Every year since the late 1950s, increasing numbers of Jordan's youth have received

formal training in the country's rapidly expanding education system. By the late 1980s, nearly all children aged six to twelve years were attending free and compulsory primary schools. In 1987, for example, there were 3,366 schools with more than 919,645 students (Metz, 1991, p. 114). Almost eighty percent of children aged thirteen to fifteen were reported to be attending three-year preparatory schools (Metz, 1991, p. 66).

Jordan's school system is divided into four levels. Primary schools run from grades one through six, while preparatory schools follow on with grades seven through nine. If a student passes the entrance exams, he is admitted to a secondary school for grades ten through twelve. Post-secondary institutions account for all higher education. In 1987, around 69,000 students were enrolled in higher education, and women accounted for half of those spots (Metz, 1991, p. 116). Of Jordan's four universities—the University of Jordan in Amman, Yarmuk Univeristy, Jordan University of Science and Technology, and Mutah University—over half of the students in 1985 were women (Metz, 1991, p. 116). Making post-secondary education more widely available, a community college network was started in the late 1980s with 53 schools under its domain.

2. Socio-Political Organizations

The first women's associations in Jordan emerged during the 1940s in the same fashion as those in Egypt during the 1920s. Generally speaking, women's initiatives during this period consisted of holding meetings to address women's issues on health and welfare as well as to provide Jordanian mothers with more modern techniques to care for their children's needs (Brand, 1998, p. 121). In 1944, the Women's Social Solidarity

Society was formed and placed under the leadership of Princess Misbah* (Gallagher, 1995, p. 211). Its goals were mostly charitable: to care for children and provide assistance to the poor and needy. A year later, another group entered the scene. The Society of the Jordanian Women's Federation, headed by Princess Zayn, set out to raise social status of women (Brand, 1998, p. 121). The two societies were then merged into the government-sponsored Jordanian Women's Hashemite Union, but it dissolved within a year (Gallagher, 1995, p. 211).

Although ceasing to exist, the Jordanian Women's Hashemite Union set the example for future women's associations in Jordan. Between 1951 and 1979, more than 340 charitable societies were established throughout the kingdom. Unfortunately, their work would not progress beyond that of a social group. According to Brand,

> These groups generally comprised wealthy women who, as a way of filling free time, provided assistance to alleviate poverty or to support orphanages and similar institutions. Most of their time was devoted to parties and elaborate meetings, with little energy spent on serious work (Brand, 1998, p. 121).

Emerging in the midst of the purely social nature of the aforementioned groups was a women's movement that began to formulate and pursue a political agenda in the 1950s. These organizations differed from their predecessors in that they were concerned with improving social conditions and raising the educational level of Jordanian women, as well as promoting better child health care (Brand, 1998, p. 121). The first such group was the Arab Women's Federation (AWF), established in 1954. Its aims were to fight illiteracy, raise women's socioeconomic levels, prepare women to exercise rights as full

* The early participation of royalty in the women's movement is significant in that it sets a precedent for future efforts. As later discussed, the current Jordanian women's front has been assumed by Princess

citizens, and develop bonds with other Arab women as well as with women around the world (Brand, 1998, p. 121).

The 1970s saw a continuation and expansion women's groups on the political front. During the era of martial law that followed the 1967 defeat in the Arab-Israeli War, educated and professional women began to distinguish their interests from national struggles and to organize around issues such as the right to equal employment (Gallagher, 1995, p. 211).

Licensed by the Ministry of the Interior in 1974, the Society of the Women's Federation in Jordan (WFJ) espoused goals toward raising women's educational and socioeconomic levels, and was similar to the AWF with a Jordanian focus. The WJF also published studies on women and their rights, a bold step not taken to this point (Brand, 1998, p.121). On the other hand, the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) established in 1976 professed to be another professional association. Its officers were well-connected women, yet they held with little business experience aside from being the wives of prominent businessmen (Brand, 1998, p. 28).

Women's organizations existed in great numbers in Jordan, but the problem was that they were not unified in their efforts or approaches to initiate change. Perceived as antagonistic to the government, the WFJ was shut down by the same ministry that instituted it (Brand, 1998, p. 126). It is more likely that the organization was closed because the regime had lost control over it. The closure of the WFJ left Jordanian women without an independent institutional framework to pursue or discuss central feminist issues. Emerging from this vacuum was the General Federation of Jordanian

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Basma.

Women (GFJW), which unsuccessfully tried to join together the existing women's social societies with leading women activists in the form a new union (Brand, 1998, p. 126). The GFJW met several roadblocks. Unlike the WFJ, the GFJW was recognized by only one wing of the General Federation of Arab Women. Furthermore, it remained isolated from the majority of Jordanian women and lacked a progressive agenda. The final blow to the GFJW was that of membership. It depended upon societies and clubs to provide members who would be subjected to the oversight of the Ministry of Social Development (Brand, 1998, p. 127).

As a result of a lacking solidarity among independent women's groups, there has been a clear reassertion of state involvement that further discourages activity outside of the official framework (Brand, 1998, p.171). Representing royal intervention to dictate movement is Princess Basma. Brand says that "the argument is that Princess Basma has been given the 'women's movement' portfolio. In this role she must strike a balance between modernization and tradition acceptable to the broader regime and societal concerns" (Brand, 1998, p. 170). Accordingly, the Princess established the Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW) in 1992. This group's functions consisted of working to improve women's social status and increase their involvement in development, upgrading their legal status, and improving their political participation (Brand, 1998, p. 173).

In 1993, Jordan had a few hundred women's associations, five women's organizations and two women's unions. They see each other as rivals for members and compete for resources, and thus have not successfully consolidated their efforts to advance women's issues (Brand, 1998, p. 168). While Jordan has a long history of

women's socio-political organizations, little gains have presented themselves as a result. The fragmented nature of the women's movement provided an opening for the regime to intervene, upon which it promptly capitalized in the form of Princess Basma.

3. Political Rights and Personal Status Laws

At the highest level of Jordanian legislation, the constitution states that all citizens are equal under the law in terms of rights and obligations. However, there is no explicit ban of discrimination on the basis of gender, even though specific protections against prejudices of race, language, and religion were included (Brand, 1998, p. 130). Only in National Charter of 1991 did a specific clause appear addressing the issue, stating that "Jordanians, men and women, are equal before the law, with no discrimination between them in rights and responsibilities, regardless of race, language, or religion" (As cited in Brand, 1998, p. 135). The stronger language of the charter leaves no question that women are considered equivalent to men, as was the case in the constitutional clause.

Outside of official domestic documents, Jordan has been the signatory of several international conventions. It ratified a UN convention against all forms of discrimination against women, as well as other international conventions specifically addressing the issues of marriage age and marriage contracts. Jordan's acceptance of these conventions is not widely known, especially among its constituents (Brand, 1998, p. 135). Therefore it is difficult to assess advantages the acceptance of such documents means for Jordanian women.

Citizenship is a sensitive issue in Jordanian politics. All Jordanian men and women are entitled to citizenship, although only a man can pass his citizenship onto his children (Brand, 1998, p. 130). A draft law was submitted to the regime that calls for the

ability of Jordanian women to pass their nationality onto their children and foreign husbands, but no ruling has yet been made. (Brand, 1998, p. 137)

On the major personal status laws of marriage and divorce, Jordan continues to allow polygamy and arbitrary divorce on the part of the husband. Jordan also maintains a younger legal marriage age than the other countries of this study at fifteen (Gallagher, 1995, p. 209). More alarming is the legislation regarding honor killings. According to a section of the 1960 penal code, "he who discovers his wife or one of his female relatives committing adultery and kills, wounds, or injures one or both of them is exempted from any penalty" (As cited in Brand, 1998, p. 133). Taken together, these laws convey to a Jordanian woman that overall control rests with her male family members (Brand, 1998, p. 139).

Women's organizations seek to change some of the aforementioned provisions through draft laws. For example, one draft law amends passport legislation to allow women the right to acquire passports without the approval of their husbands. Unfortunately, these have not received much attention. Brand explains that:

> successive prime ministers and governments, as well as the palace, may have preferred to maintain the appearance of working on a new draft, thus placating those who want change while never actually presenting one, thus avoiding the outcry from both liberal and conservative circles that any proposed changes would be likely to trigger (Brand, 1998, p. 150).

E. CONCLUSIONS

From the preceding country sketches, I observed that changes in a political regime negatively affected the organizational strength of a feminist movement when it lacked the development of a university-educated, professional women's class. If a women's movement is able to promote an agenda that generates broad-based support and

transcends class divisions, then it will more likely be prepared to challenge a regime undergoing liberalization to institute social changes for its members. The intervening variable that appears to influence the organizational strength of a women's movement in light of regime liberalization is the degree to which women are integrated into the educational system.

Although all three of the aforementioned criteria—education, political environment, and organizational strength of women's groups—are necessary components of a feminist movement in the MENA case studies, one stands alone as the foundation for its development. The expansion of university education opportunities to middle- and lower-class women creates favorable circumstances that a movement may unfold. In Egypt, for instance, women were admitted to Cairo University in 1929, producing nearly 4,000 graduates alone upon the rise of the Free Officers to power. By the 1940s, the National Feminist Party began to pursue political rights for women. On the contrary, Algerian university students numbered only 51 in 1951. During the revolution from 1954 to 1962, activist women trusted that their social emancipation would accompany Algeria's independence from France and there was no separate movement of which to speak. These examples highlight the general observation that university education for women is positively correlated with the emergence of a leadership to orchestrate a relatively autonomous women's movement.

The next important variable is the political environment in which a women's movement arises. The cases provided diverse examples of this aspect. In Tunisia, the government was ready to implement social and cultural changes that benefited women, such as the ban on polygamy. In the same stroke, however, the regime effectively

constrained the development of an independent women's movement because Bourguiba held the power to determine to what level Tunisian women would be able to mobilize for feminist rights. The same holds true in the other cases. An interesting observation is that when women are forced to append their issues to a ongoing national movement for whatever reason, their cause is largely ignored once independence is gained.

Finally, the strength of women's socio-political organizations affects the degree to which the group will be able to sustain an autonomous movement in pursuance of women's rights. Recalling social movement theory, McAdam describes the necessity of mobilizing structures to first build a sustained movement against the regime, and next construct a platform upon which its supporters can voice their concerns. Without these two steps, a social movement will not last very long. In the case of Jordan, upperclass women were content to provide charity to the needy of society. Since their aim never extended beyond a charitable mission, they were unable to amass general support for their associations to bloom into active feminist forums.

Thus far, I have reiterated the importance of education, the political environment, and organizational strength as major factors in determining the success or failure of a cohesive women's movement to effect social and cultural changes. The next chapter revisits these variables as well as other contributing factors in greater detail in order to present a clear understanding of what to look for in evaluating the Palestinian case.

III. THE EMERGING FRAMEWORK

Thus far, I have highlighted the development of women's movements in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and Jordan according to three variables: education, socio-political organizations, and personal status laws. This chapter will present common themes found in the cases in order to expose a general dynamic that the movements share despite their individual intricacies. The goal is to determine whether the framing processes (education) and mobilizing structures (socio-political organizations) are advanced to the point where a movement is ready to capitalize on an opportunity of regime liberalization when it presents itself, thereby defining the emerging framework.

A. EDUCATION

Charles Micaud reveals an interesting fact regarding MENA women—in traditional Muslim societies, they were uneducated and barred from any sort of social life to the extent that linguists could isolate distinct female dialects in most Arab countries (Micaud, 1964, p. 50). Under colonization, these societies were introduced to Western political concept of nationhood and soon developed their own nationalist movements. An important derivation from this shift in ideology was the concept of mass education to enlighten and modernize the population.

Along these lines, I contend that as more women were afforded opportunities to pursue higher education, a class of well-educated, professional females emerges. It is from this group that a genuine women's movement develops, which pursues socio-political issues rather than serving traditional, charitable functions. In order to conceptualize and illustrate this argument, I compiled data furnished by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization into Figures 1 and 2. The

information was drawn from annual issues of the United Nations *Statistical Yearbook* from 1956 through 1970. For both figures, I looked at the enrollment data of female students in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education. I also noted the population estimates provided for the same time period.

Before explaining the results, it is important to note the limitations of these graphs. Many data sets did not contain complete information from year to year. Within a specified year, the statistics were often provisional or estimated. Also, the time frame of the information does not extend back beyond the mid-1950s. Nevertheless, lacking a more reliable source, I was aware of these deficiencies in the analysis of this data.

1. Percentage of Women Enrolled in School

In order to use the data comparatively, I had to construct a scale that would account for large population differences between the countries. For Figure 1, I first added the number of female students enrolled in each level of a country's educational system: pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary/higher. Next, I entered the statistics recorded for the country's female population. Finally, I expressed this data in terms of a percent ratio, dividing the number of women educated by the female population. Although a crude formulation, it served the purpose.

In three countries—Algeria, Egypt, and Jordan—the government has proclaimed education to be free, compulsory, and universal in principle. Tunisia differs in that education is free, but neither universal nor compulsory. Nevertheless, it is Algeria that lagged behind the other countries in total female enrollment until the 1970s, when it

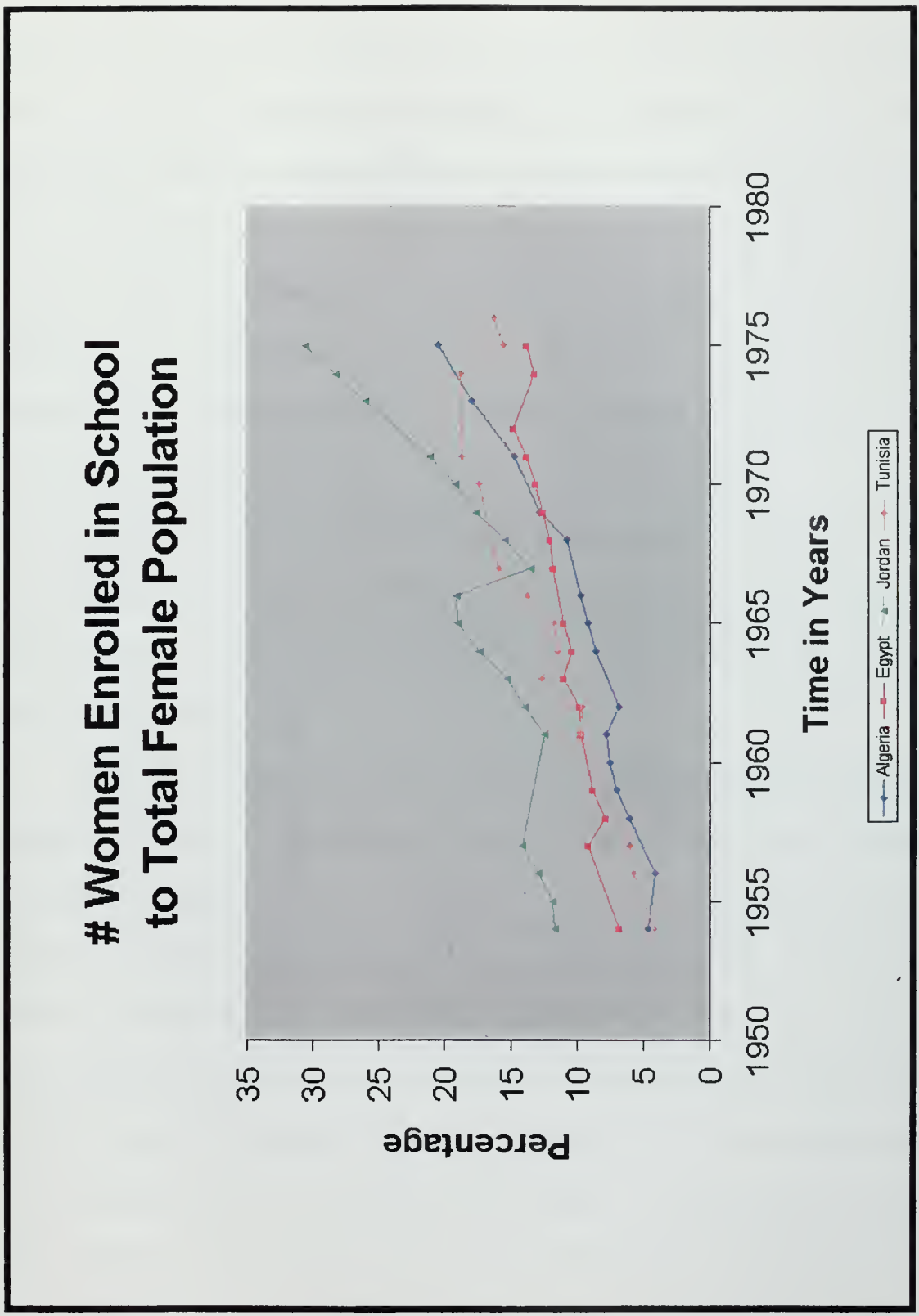

Figure 1: # Women in University to Total Female Population.

began to extend more academic opportunities to its girls. Tunisia and Egypt both display steady increases when subjected to this calculation. As the graph shows, Jordan has the most dramatic increase in female enrollment in a sharp, upward trend, especially since 1968. The fluctuation in the Jordanian plot is explained by the population statistics provided. UNESCO explains that the results were based on a census of housing, which included a count of persons by sex. No formal census of the population has ever been taken in Jordan for the apparent reason that it is heavily comprised of Palestinians.

2. Percentage of Women Enrolled at the University Level

The more revealing graph (Figure 2) looks exclusively at the number of women enrolled in a country's university program. The calculation for this graph followed the same procedure as used in Figure 1, except in this case I focused on the data provided only at the tertiary/higher level versus total female population.

This data reinforces my hypothesis that an authentic women's movement emerges from a class of highly educated, professional women. Egypt proved to be the best country among those studied for a woman to pursue a university-level academic program. From start to finish, Egypt outperformed the other countries. Interestingly, Egypt also held the most autonomous women's movement of the four cases. Jordan's trend parallels that of Egypt, but to a lesser degree. I would also rank it second among the MENA cases with respect to the independent nature of its women's movement. Tunisia is the next plot in descending order on the graph. As indicated in the previous chapter, Tunisian women benefited from extensive social reform put into effect by the regime, but had little to no women's movement to speak of at that time. Further supporting my hypothesis that a women's movement develops from a well-educated,

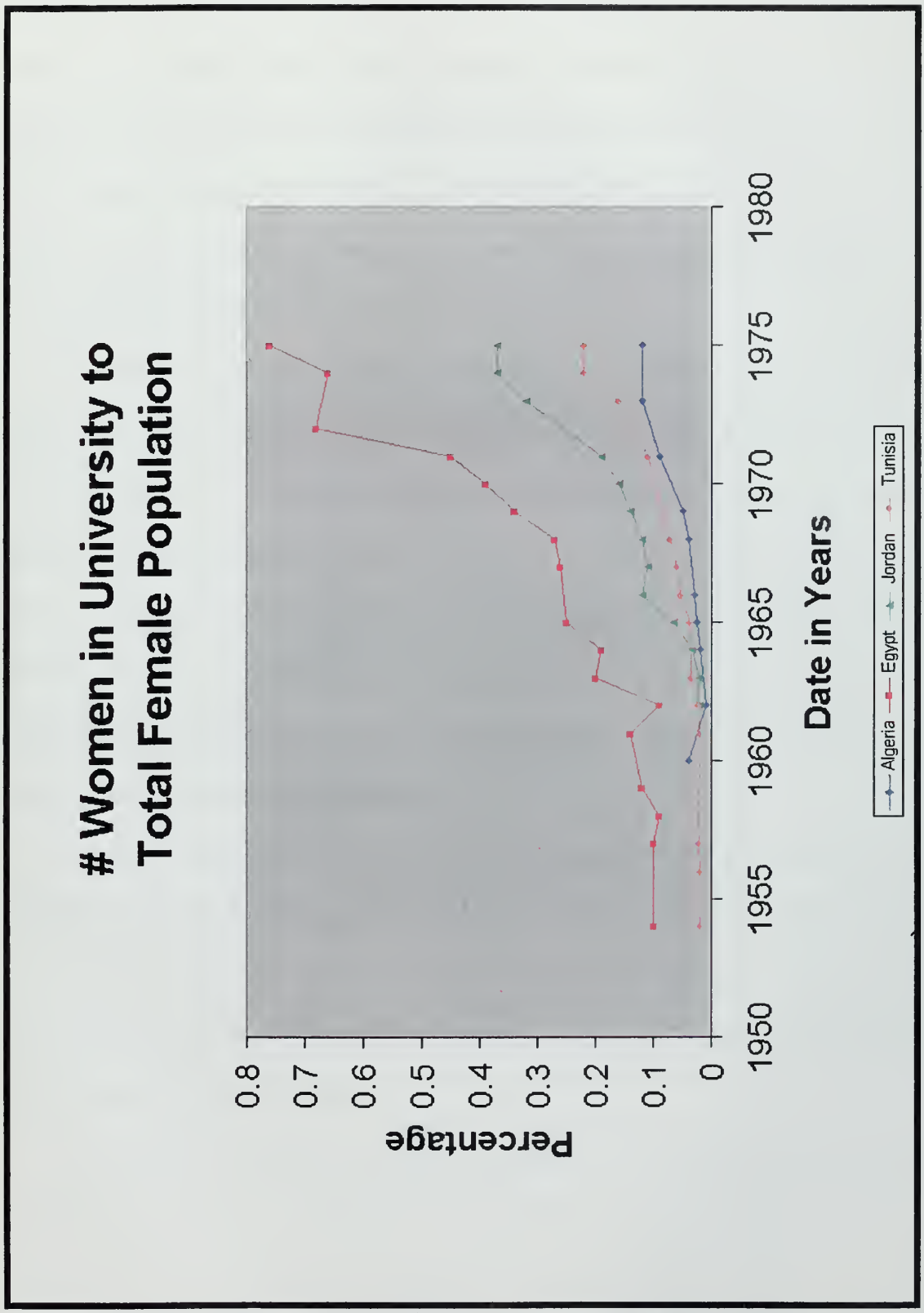

Figure 2: # Women Enrolled in School to Total Female Population.

professional class of women is the Algerian case. Its percentages remain on the low end, with a slight upturn in the 1970s. Moreover, until 1970, there is no noticeable appreciation of university female enrollment. I was unable to locate a specific reasoning for the change after the 1970s, but only until very recently have Algerian women begun to consolidate their efforts to combat the Islamist influence on personal status issues.

B. SOCIO-POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

As the education data shows, the effectiveness of women's organizations in the MENA countries is derived from the university-educated women. These feminists have the ability to mobilize lower- and middle-class women because they share similar social backgrounds. Furthermore, they tend to define their goals in political vice charitable terms. Elite women, on the other hand, are less likely to promote a feminist platform because they are comfortable with the rights their social status affords them. Consequently, women in the high social stratum interact with others of the same class and pursue purely philanthropic missions.

Another consideration of women's mobilizing structures is the nature of the leadership. Do individual women run the group or is it ultimately controlled by the government? As we have seen in the case of Tunisia, the Bourguiba regime set the organizational structure and agenda for the women. His assertion left Tunisian women with little to do but follow his lead.

One factor in framing a women's movement is in the hands of the women themselves. They face the decision of attaching the women's movement to a broader, stronger nationalist movement or pursuing their emancipation independently of it. Because of societal pressures, the choice is already made in most cases. It would be

inappropriate for women to fight for a feminist cause outside of a nationalist movement if they do not have strong organizations in place to amass support for their agenda. The women then place their faith in the men to deliver egalitarian practices once national independence is achieved. The downfall occurs more often than not when women's issues are ignored following regime change. If they are able to consolidate their grievances at this time, they may succeed in separating from and challenging the new authority. Unfortunately, if the government takes over the women's movement before organizations are in place to resist, the next opportunity may be a long time coming. Algerian women are learning this difficult lesson even today.

C. PERSONAL STATUS LAWS

Marriage and divorce are key issues in the Middle East. As previously expressed in the individual case studies, personal status laws fell under the jurisdiction of the religious courts. Feminists suffer a great disadvantage in this system because of its discriminatory nature toward women's place in society.

Civil intervention on behalf of personal status laws that raise women's status in society disturbs the balance that the regime holds with the religious establishment. Although creating a bitter competition between these two sectors, women's groups want the personal status laws to fall under civil court jurisdiction, reasoning that they will be treated as an equal citizen under the law.

D. REGIME DECISIONS

When a regime decides to expand women's rights, it risks assault from another group, namely the Islamists. This scenario does not present a problem until the government loses influence over popular political support for it and faces the reality of its

demise. At this point, the political authority can choose one of two options in order to maintain power—incorporate or marginalize the Islamist threat.

Jordan's parliamentary elections of 1989 are a case in point. Economic crisis in the country forced King Hussein to implement austerity measures as dictated by the World Bank, including the elimination of subsidies on Jordanian commodities. When riots broke out in the country as a result, Jordan presented liberal political reforms in order to quell the population. The parliamentary elections served as a vehicle for people to express opinions of whom they thought best represented them. Surprising many, the Islamists won the largest block of parliamentary seats while many government-supported candidates lost their seats, sending a clear message to the monarchy (Gallagher, 1995, p. 221). In the successive parliamentary election of 1993, Islamists lost half of their seats due to a change in the voting procedure. Even though the regime had tolerated and incorporated the Islamists for four years, it nonetheless looked for an avenue to marginalize them at the first chance.

In conclusion, when regime liberalization occurs, there are several variables that determine the extent to which women can successfully use this period of instability to promote feminist issues. If they are not organized into cohesive groups with an agenda specifically focused on women's liberation, their demands are more easily ignored by the political authority. As I have argued, the consolidated movement has at its roots a class of university-educated, professional women who are able to mobilize women across social class cleavages into a consolidated front demanding their emancipation. The next chapter will present development of the Palestinian women's movement in order to set up its evaluation against the aforementioned criteria.

IV. THE PALESTINIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

This chapter focuses on women's political activism in the Occupied Territories during the Palestinian uprising known as the Intifada. Recalling the important factors that influenced the MENA case studies, I will tailor the Palestinian discussion with them in mind. The first variable is the integration of women into the education system. As previously stated, a feminist movement in the region draws its leadership from the middle class, university-educated segment of its female population. The second part is the ability of these women to consolidate and generate support across class lines for social change, differing from the initial women's movements that served a purely charitable function. The final factor is the environment in which this women's movement arises. If it is subordinate to a national movement or dictated and regulated by the government, the movement will most likely be unsuccessful.

Before endeavoring to explain the causes of participation on the part of Palestinian women, there are numerous factors to take into consideration. First, as implied by its name, the territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip remain under the occupation of Israel and are therefore unable to function as an autonomous entity. Thus, the women's movement is contained within the framework of a larger struggle for national independence. Next, the Occupied Territories are separated geographically by Israel. This division lends to a greater variance in economic, political, and cultural conditions and experiences for each region than might be found in a contiguous geographic area. To further complicate the issue, a significant number of Palestinians are dispersed throughout the Middle East, the ramifications of which are beyond the scope of this paper.

The dynamics of the above considerations make the issue of women and politics in the Occupied Territories a difficult one to broach. This notwithstanding, this chapter will illustrate the social conditions and institutions that allowed Palestinian women the ability to have a political impact on the Intifada. Specifically, I examine the development of educational opportunities and the formation of structured socio-political organizations that provided women with a venue to attach gender issues to the national movement with greater weight and legitimacy than during prior movements.

Most scholars agree that the expansion of educational opportunity coupled with the capability of women's committees to mobilize grassroots support are the main reasons the Palestinian feminist movement gained momentum and publicity during the Intifada. Ten years later, however, the debate still exists as to whether or not women should pursue equal rights in conjunction with the national struggle. The alternative is for women to support national independence in the belief that after the Palestinians have a state, their rights will be properly recognized. An expansion of this argument will be presented in Chapter V.

One final task before proceeding is to offer a working definition of political participation. For my purposes, this concept is determined on two levels: mass participation and organized institutional involvement. Because a woman's political activity may be constrained by a variety of factors—freedom of movement, household obligations, or patriarchal limitations, to name a few—it is necessary to distinguish, yet include, both levels of participation in order to fully comprehend the extent to which women were politically effective during the Intifada.

A. EDUCATION

Joost R. Hiltermann, in his study of the labor and women's movements in the Occupied Territories, points out two structural conditions that account for a change in outlook lending to the politicization of Palestinian women. One of these conditions is their increased access to education after 1967, and so the chapter begins with education as the precursor to modern socio-political activism (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 4). According to a FAFO study, education is seen as a durable, but moveable asset that can be used in whatever circumstances a person eventually finds him or herself in, in order to gain social standing and economic well-being. Education also makes the boundaries of local communities increasingly porous and the hold of traditional local elites more tenuous (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online). This view of education holds true for the Occupied Territories although, as in the other MENA countries, marriage often supercedes education as the avenue for social mobility for Palestinian women.

Until 1967 the educational systems of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were administered by two independent states, Jordan and Egypt, respectively. The Israeli occupation further complicated the system; it kept the current administrations but added its own restrictions—bans on Palestinian history in textbooks, controls over the hiring of teachers, and jurisdiction over financing the schools (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online). Nonetheless, the construction of new academic institutions proceeded fervently. For example, from 1967 to 1968, West Bank schools numbered just over 800. Currently, over 1300 schools exist. The same pattern is seen in Gaza, where the number of schools has increased from 166 in 1967 to approximately 340 today (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online). It is important to note that there are three different types of schools in the

Occupied Territories (government schools, UNRWA schools and private schools), and the education afforded in each varies.

After Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the 1967 war, it tolerated the dramatic expansion of the education system in the territories, especially in the founding of new universities (Robinson, 1997, p. 20). No longer a luxury for the notable elite, who were the only ones that could afford to send their children abroad for schooling, education was now accessible to the middle and lower classes. With the location of schools so close to home, student enrollment mushroomed in as little as decade. According to Glenn E. Robinson, during the 1977 school year, Palestinian university students numbered 2,601. Only ten years later, nearly 16,000 students were enrolled in the universities (Robinson, 1997, p. 20).

The inclusion of women in this change cannot be overestimated. An important breakthrough, Palestinian universities allowed for a dramatic increase in the education of women. With this development, a new consciousness emerged. Women began participating in student unions whose ideologies paralleled the major nationalist factions of the PLO (Robinson, 1997, p. 22). Membership in these academically-based groups led Palestinian women to greater political awareness and activism, as well as to assume greater political responsibilities.

One statistic that confirms the increase of educated women is to compare the gender gap for educational attainment in the Occupied Territories. According to the 1992 FAFO study, the gender gap for number of completed school years was markedly reduced over a few decades. To clarify this point, Palestinians aged 50 to 59 were at university age from 1940 to 1950. The gender gap in this group reflected only nineteen

percent of women educated to the same level as men. In one decade, the gender gap closed to 39 percent for those aged 40 to 49. The most dramatic reductions are seen in the next two age brackets, with 83 percent of women attaining men's education levels in those aged 30 to 39, and an impressive 96 percent for those aged 20 to 29 (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online). By examining these numbers, one can conclude that the access to educational opportunities opened markedly in about two generations. Moreover, these statistics confirm the dramatic impact of university education opportunities available to women starting in the 1970s. There are however, some remaining roadblocks to education.

Affecting both genders was the closing of all educational institutions by Israel in response to the Intifada. Robinson provides a detailed account of the impacts of the academic closure on the Palestinians, during which time many communities attempted to create an informal education system in place of schools. Israel claimed that they had become "centers for organizing and stimulating violence" and especially for the universities, this was true (Robinson, 1997, p. 101). In dismantling the universities, students no longer had a forum in which to formulate political strategy. Women were hit particularly hard; without the student unions, they were left with little choice but to seek another avenue—the socio-political organizations—to develop and exercise their political activism.

More specifically to women is the societal pressure to marry and begin raising a family. Marriage is another inhibiting factor for women pursuing higher education. First, advanced education for women continues to meet a certain societal resistance. Many families fear that attendance at co-educational institutions can lead women into

situations that may have the potential to reflect poorly on family honor. More importantly, the traditional expectation of women is that their ultimate fulfillment comes through marriage and children, not education. Among many Palestinians, advanced education for women is often viewed as an impediment to marriage. It is the roles obtainable through marriage, rather than opportunities opened by education, that primarily define a woman's place in Palestinian society (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online). Thus, advanced education for women functions to reduce the chances of marriage for at least two reasons. First, advanced education delays the age of marriage for a woman, particularly since in Palestinian society it is not acceptable for a woman to be both married and a student. Second, the percentage of men with equal or higher education is significantly reduced (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online). In Palestinian and most societies around the world, a man is less likely to marry a woman who is more educated than he, thus lowering the potential suitors for a university-educated woman.

Another interesting statistic of the FAFO study examined the impact of the father's or husband's education regarding the latitude a woman might have in pursuance of employment. The study found that a large majority of women thought it was acceptable to be employed outside the home. However, since authority in these matters is normally the prerogative of men, it tends to be men's attitudes that determine whether or not women are actually free to seek employment. The implication of these two factors suggests that a woman's ability to participate in the public domain might be affected to a much greater degree by the education of her father or husband rather than by her own educational level (Heiberg, FAFO Study 151, Online).

B. SOCIO-POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Before delving into the women's committees of the Intifada, it is important to note the roots of the women's movement in Palestine, and later, the Occupied Territories. The birth of the movement was during the 1920s as a result of economic and social changes set into motion by the opposing forces of colonialism and nationalism. The inhabitants of Palestine were protesting the rapid influx of Jewish settlers on their land. At the same time, the ideology of Zionism also introduced the concept of Arab nationalism to an otherwise clan-based population. Women's leadership came from exactly the same class that produced the leadership for the national movement: the class of urban traders and urban-based, absentee landowners (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 128). During the period of the British Mandate, activist women were typically those who had the opportunity to receive education or who were related in some way to men active in political life from wealthy, prominent Palestinian families (Khamisin, 1989, p. 178). Such women were usually the wives or sisters of nationalist leaders. To characterize the activities of the Palestinian women, Hiltermann offers this comparison:

> Whereas in other Arab countries, such as Egypt and Tunisia, early women's organizations fought for such typically socio-political demands as the abolition of polygamy and for the right to vote, in Palestine women demanded that the Balfour Declaration be revoked, that Jewish immigrations to Palestine be restricted and that Palestinian political prisoners receive better treatment (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 128).

Although also displayed as described above, the role of women during the Mandate period was usually limited to relief work in times of crisis.

From 1948 to 1967, when Jordan controlled the West Bank and Egypt governed the Gaza Strip, and Egyptian rule over the Gaza Strip, women's activities did not politically accompany nationalist or gender issues. Women proved fundamental in the

establishment of charitable organizations such as orphanages or centers for the elderly, but did so within the framework of existing religious institutions (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 129). They provided important services to the community that were otherwise neglected by the Jordanian and Egyptian governments.

Politics began working its way back into the women's movement with the founding of the Palestinian Women's Association (PWA) in the West Bank in 1964. Hiltermann cites the PWA as an ideological precursor of the modern women's movement in the West Bank (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 131). The PWA sent women as delegates to the first Palestinian National Council meeting. The following year the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) was established as the women's branch of the PLO. Still, after 1967 and beginning of the occupation, the major framework for women's organization and activity remained in the over one hundred traditional charitable societies located in the towns. As previously noted, the these organizations espoused national and charitable sentiments led by urban middle-class women who served the rural and refugee poor, but largely without their participation (Giacaman, 1989, p. 160).

In'ash Al-Usra was one such charitable organization. Founded in 1965 in response to pressing social needs, one of the group's guiding principles since 1967 has been "to train women, employ them in productive activities, and pay them for their work, especially in the production of traditional wares that do not compete with Israeli goods" (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 131). Women would produce and sell intricate Palestinian embroidery or authentic Palestinian baked goods. In'ash Al-Usra typified this generation of organizations, whose goal was to provide a means for women to earn an income but did little to educate and empower women politically (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 130).

Nevertheless, Hiltermann stresses the importance of these charitable organizations, as they were the springboard for the activists of today.

During the 1970s, a new generation of women emerged. Many of them had been politicized in the student movements at Palestinian universities and took part in the voluntary work committees. The Voluntary Works Program, founded in 1972, was a group of factional grassroots organizations that promoted health care, agricultural relief, and women's rights (Robinson, 1997, p. 29). Using these projects to reach out to the community, the Voluntary Works Program helped to mobilize a broad national constituency that to this point remained undeveloped. Economically, the program had little impact, but socially it bridged the gap between the urban and rural elements of society. Robinson emphasizes the importance of this interaction, stating, "By minimizing urban-rural class divides, Palestinians were actively engaging and consolidating a national Palestinian consciousness..." (Robinson, 1997, p. 30).

The establishment of the new grassroots women's committees emulated the changes in the greater movement. In contrast to the charitable women's organizations, the new groups sought to involve the majority of women in the West Bank who lived in villages, along with women in camps (Giacaman, 1989, p. 158). The urban poor, women workers, intellectuals and urban middle-class women joined together in a united women's movement. Three of the four major committees articulated a program of improving women's status in society, although national liberation remained the overriding concern.

The result was a partially legal socio-political movement consisting of institutions and popular organizations set up by local activists who attempted "to mobilize the Palestinian masses by offering them services that were otherwise not available, while

articulating nationalist concerns and aspirations as part of their day-to-day work" (Hiltermann, 1991, p.5). By integrating the two objectives and promulgating them in one committee, these groups provided the local institutional infrastructure as well as the leadership for the uprising that began in December 1987.

Hiltermann evaluates the Palestinian movement by examining whether or not it met several of the prerequisites for successful mobilization and collective action as put forth by Jeffrey Paige in *Agrarian Revolution.* Paige's first condition is the presence of political structures that can provide the organizational and ideological framework for the popular movement (As cited in Hiltermann, 1991, p. 8). Hiltermann believes this is exemplified in the Palestine Liberation Organization and its institutions. Next, Paige calls for the blurring of class lines, as demonstrated in the unification of rural and urban elements of society. Hiltermann and Robinson clearly state that a development of a new elite, urbanization, and education helped to consolidate social classes among the Palestinians. At the end of the 1970's, a generation of women was coming of age, entering universities or the labor force and attempting to make their voices heard in the established organizations (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 131). Thus, women were included in the mobilization and politicization process that led to the Intifada.

In March of 1978, the Palestinian Union of Women's Work Committee (PUWWC), fractured into four groups representing the ideological divisions within the Palestinian movement: the Federation of Palestinian Women's Action Committees (FPWAC) and Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; the Union of Palestinian Working Women's Committees (UPWWC) and Palestinian Communist Party; the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC) and Popular Front for the Liberation of

Palestine; and finally the Women's Committee for Social Work (Holt, 1992, p. 40). The founders of the first network of women's groups were graduates of Bir Zeit University and other professional women, but soon the movement included working women (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 28).

While many of activities of the committees are not explicitly political, the self-organization of the community and the encouragement to become somewhat self-sufficient make the neighborhood committees political instruments, as shown by Israel's ban on them in 1988. Aside from their own committees, women also had influence in the popular committees. Giacaman writes:

> They are active in the medical relief committees which gather information about people's blood and pass the information onto the hospitals. Women form the majority in the education committees which organize alternative studies since the Israelis closed the schools. The aid committees go to areas which are under curfew or siege and distribute food, money, and moral support. The Israelis have difficulty in dealing with the committees because they involve women, and not just those who are involved in political groups (Giacaman, 1989, p. 156).

However, women's organizations were in many ways lagging, being in part miniature versions of those of the men. Women struggled to formulate a disassociated platform that defined gender-based issues outside of the context of the national cause (Giacaman, 1989, p. 156). This was a feat to be overcome only with the signing of the Declaration of Principles in 1993.

Women's political action has passed through three phases, roughly in parallel with the stages of the uprising itself. First were the mass confrontations with the Israeli army: sit-ins, barricade-building, and demonstrations. The second phase composed of building and consolidation of the network of neighborhood and popular committees that were declared illegal on 18 August 1988. Finally, the movement looked for ways in

which women could consolidate the gains of the uprising to achieve permanent changes in the social and political status of women. In essence, the movement went from reactionary to forward-looking (Giacaman, 1989, pp. 166-7).

For their part, approximately three hundred women were detained for at least a day over the course of the uprising in the first year. This compares to about 20,000 men detained during the outbreak of the Intifada (Giacaman, 1989, p. 162). With so many men under detention, women have been propelled into new political roles to fill the void. Also, women have expanded their motherly role beyond the family in a greater sense to that of the community. In this respect, women have enlarged their traditional role rather than adopting a completely new role. With this change came greater obligations, such as visiting the sick and wounded of the Intifada (Giacaman, 1989, p. 161).

C. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AFTER OSLO

The signing of the Declaration of Principles in September of 1993 essentially ended the Intifada. With this chapter of history closing, women's organizations took the opportunity to redefine their goals and focus their energy on developing an agenda independent of the national movement. Palestinian women were now able to articulate views and adopt strategies that distinctly differed from those assumed to coincide with the promotion of Palestinian independence. Immediately their program was more clearly defined: they were directly concerned with women's liberation and the promotion of women's rights, a shift in strategy from that during the Intifada (Abdulhadi, 1998, p. 1).

In 1988, attempts were made by academic feminists and by women's bureaus of the Popular Front, Democratic Front, and the Palestinian People's Party to put to practice a celebrated passage from the Declaration of Palestinian Independence that pledged

nondiscrimination on the basis of sex, race religion, or political affiliation. This spurred the discussion of a new social code in the form of three distinct drafts of the "Declaration of Principles of Palestinian Women's Rights" circulating in 1993. The GUPW, with support from other women's groups, took the initiative to announce their declaration in August 1994 irrespective of the Palestinian Authority's perspective on the matter (Abdulhadi, 1998, p. 5).

The 1990s opened a window of opportunity for Palestinian women to implement their agenda. The first step was to formulate a strategy addressing specifically feminist concerns. As in most Arab countries, personal affairs in the Occupied Territories continue to be regulated by religious codes. Whereas civil laws applied to various state and community affairs, most of the Arab countries ran their "personal" affairs on the basis of Islamic law or modifications thereof (Dajani, 1994, p. 2). One of the main goals of the Palestinian women's movement is stimulate change in personal status laws. They want to abolish polygamy and initiate other changes in the areas of marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. Rabiha Diab, the president of the Social Work Association affiliated with Fateh said in 1994, "We want the Palestinian state to be the second Arab state, after Tunisia, to make polygamy illegal. If we don't change this law now, we won't be able to do it for 50 years" (Dajani, 1994, p. 3)

Besides seeking revisions in personal status laws, Palestinian women are pushing for more representation in their political parties and in the new government. One of the key vehicles for achieving this goal is the Women's Affairs Technical Committee, which operates under the auspices of the Orient House. The Technical Committee includes representatives from the three political parties that support the Israel-PLO Declaration of

Principles—Fateh, FIDA, and the Palestinian People's Party—as well as politically independent academics and professionals. (Horan, 1996, Online)

Already organized and clear about their objectives, activists have a long list of demands for the Palestine Legislative Council. First, they called for the minimum age of eighteen to be set for marriage. These women also wanted the government to provide mandatory education for women through secondary school (Horan, 1996, Online).

The debate continues between feminism and nationalism. Women are encountering problems in their attempts to disassociate feminism from the greater national struggle. Nevertheless, activist women are on the ground promoting and instituting change in the Palestinian provisional government. When speaking of the modern women's movement in the Occupied Territories, one must address the primary role of Palestinian women in the national movement, but include attempts to place women's issues on the national agenda. Hiltermann warns that "proletarianization in and of itself does not necessarily lead to a woman's liberation from the restrictive bonds of family and community" (Hiltermann, 1991, p. 35). It is with this in mind that Palestinian women seek to learn from the experiences of their Arab and Muslim sisters around the region in order to most effectively balance the establishment of an independent state with their attempts to institutionalize positive changes on the feminist front.

D. CONCLUSIONS

In the Palestinian case, I observed that it also followed the trends described in Chapters II and III. Specifically, Palestinian women were incorporated into the educational system beginning in the 1970s. At the outbreak of the Intifada, these women were leading socio-political organizations that were able to reach a broad cross-section of

society and instill their members with nationalistic pride. In this sense, the women's associations were one of the primary reasons that the Intifada was capable of sustained action against Israel. For the women themselves, however, it was not until the signing of the Declaration of Priniciples that they could pursue a feminist agenda outside the auspices of the Palestinian national movement. In this respect, the women are fortunate that the national struggle did not directly result in an independent state. This delay gives the movement more time to organize and to build a following in support of women's rights upon the establishment of Palestine. One could speculate that if women in Algeria or Egypt had realized that their efforts in a national independence movement would go unrecognized, they may have appreciated an opportunity like the women in the Occupied Territories are currently experiencing.

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V. PROSPECTS FOR AUTHORITY IN PALESTINE

A major difference between the Palestinian case and the other countries presented is that the Palestinians do not officially have a state. This is one of the key variables—political environment—absent from a comprehensive understanding of the development of a Palestinian women's movement and an inherent challenge to this study. It is important to evaluate the current political structure in place in the Occupied Territories in order to appreciate the challenges women in a future Palestine will face. The most likely avenue for this to occur is through a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations rather than in a repeated attempt at revolution, like that of the Intifada. With democratic structures in place in the form of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council, popular opinion impacts the character of the provisional government by way of elections, a practice that will likely continue after achieving autonomy. The result of the democratic nature of this political system is that the public will determine who holds authority in the new state, a consideration that strongly affects the continuation of a women's movement in Palestine.

One method to project the political composition of a future Palestinian state is to determine the depth of support for two competing factions, namely the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas. One hypothesis holds that it is inversely correlated, i.e., that popular support for Hamas increases when the peace process between the PLO and Israel is deteriorating or at a standstill, and vice versa. The general question driving this chapter is: When has popular support for Hamas been the strongest among Palestinians during the peace process? This information may be useful to predict under what circumstances Hamas could generate a large enough following to threaten the

Arafat regime, thereby forcing him to consider consolidating forces with them; the by-product of such an alliance would be a concession on controversial issues, i.e., women's organizations and personal status laws.

To formulate an answer, I empirically tested this question using public opinion poll data collected by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS) and the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC) between 1993 and 1999. My intention is to present evidence suggesting that despite the competition for political support between Fateh and Hamas, political affiliation and participation is founded on a principle even more basic than ideology—the perception that politics will serve as a means to end the occupation. I discovered that support for either group was offset by a response of "I trust no one" or "no opinion." After compiling the data, this variable stood out as more telling of public support for the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations than a factional division. Potential explanations for this occurrence are explored in the findings section of this chapter.

A. METHODOLOGY

In order to answer my question, I relied heavily on data compiled by the CPRS and JMCC, organizations which conducted regular public opinion polls in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from 1993 to 1999. The JMCC performed 33 polls from which I used four applicable questions over time; twelve questions were taken from the CPRS's 45 polls. Not every question was asked repeatedly over time, and all data is available on the Internet via each agency's website.

A note must be made with regard to polling error. Confidence level and margin of error were the same for both agencies, with a confidence level of 95 percent and a

margin of error of plus or minus three percent. Two types of specific error cautioned by CPRS were sampling error and non-response error. Inherent to conducting polls, sampling error occurred because they were not administered to the entire population, but rather to sample groups reflecting a cross-section of society. Non-response error is a consideration in that if a respondent did not provide an answer to a question, his opinion went unrecorded but he remained statistically significant as a member of the polled population.

In order to coordinate the wealth of information contained in the polls, this chapter is organized into two phases. Starting at the micro level, I describe the trends observed in each of the questions over time as dictated by the individual studies. Continuing to the macro level, I synthesize the variables in light of major events during the negotiations to gain a "big picture" perspective of the dynamic between the peace process and political participation. Finally, I consider the implications of my findings with respect to the initial question driving this research.

B. EFFECTS OF THE PEACE PROCESS ON PALESTINIAN POLITICS

Basic indicators of political affiliation and support were examined in twelve separate poll questions. Three major themes emerged: 1) legitimacy of the current political institutions, e.g., Fateh, the PA, and Arafat; 2) validity of opposition groups, especially Hamas; and 3) apathy of respondents with "no opinion." The questions provided information regarding support for the current peace negotiations, participation in Palestinian elections, and approval for armed attacks on Israeli targets. Other questions looked more specifically at support for a particular faction, trust in a certain

personality, and evaluation of performances by the Palestinian Authority, Arafat, and opposition groups.

The first question I considered was: "Do you support the current peace negotiations?" This was asked by both polling agencies and indicates a general opinion toward the peace process from the Palestinian perspective. A majority of the population voiced its support for the negotiations over time: the average figure over time was 66.9 percent in the JMCC polls and 76.4 percent in the CPRS polls. These averages differ largely due to the fact that the agencies did not conduct their polls in the same months, and sentiment recorded in one month may change drastically because of events unfolding in the next month.

The most pronounced support for the peace process in the CPRS polls came in June 1996. A major event preceding this poll and potentially prompting such a high response was the Palestinian National Council's twenty-first session in April when it approved amending clauses calling for the destruction of Israel in the national charter and also endorsed the formation of a new Palestinian government (CPRS Poll 23, June 1996). In this case support may reflect a sense of improvement in the transition toward autonomy as well as trust in the Palestinian government. Conversely, support for the peace process was at its lowest of 60.2 percent in April 1997. This upturn was accompanied by an increased level of support for suicide bombings against Israeli targets. In November 1998, support peaked at 75.2 percent following a stable trend in previous months. This could be attributed to the negotiations culminating in the Wye Memorandum, confirming public approval of the breakthrough.

To the question "How do you view the future for Palestinians?" respondents were given the options of optimism, pessimism, and no answer. The data shows that historically, optimism prevailed at an average of 65.5 percent. Confidence saw its highest levels in the months after the signing of the Taba accord in September 1995, rising 31.5 percent from September to October alone. Pessimism, however, also enjoyed its turn in the spotlight. After the Hebron massacre, a 14.5 percent increase in pessimism was reported in the CPRS poll of March 1994. Another dramatic rise in pessimism followed the Hasmonean Tunnel clash of 24 September 1996, when Israel revealed a new exit onto the Via Delorosa and was met with violent confrontation (Bickerton, 1998, pp. 302-203).

The next topic indicates declared support for a faction or a personality. The factions charted here are Fateh, Hamas, National Independents, and "no one." Public opinion for these groups constantly fluctuated over time. I omitted the responses for other political parties for two reasons: 1) support registered by respondents was not statistically significant; and 2) support for these groups remained fairly consistent.

As expected, the backing for Fateh stood far above that for any other group. The declines seen in January 1994, March 1995, and December 1997 are attributed to unstable conditions in the Occupied Territories and the perception of unfulfilled political and economic expectations after the signing of the DOP. For example, the CPRS poll in January 1994 was conducted after the killing of five Palestinians by the Israeli military in Hebron and Gaza (CPRS Poll 5, 1994). A decline in support for Fateh may also reflect a temporary disillusionment with the group but did not necessarily translate into an increase in the popularity of opposition groups. In fact, Hamas experiences relatively

stable support, albeit minimal when compared to that of Fateh. March 1996 marked the beginning of the decrease to current levels for Hamas, and may be due to suicide bombings it claimed responsibility for against Israeli targets at a time when opposition to such attacks was at a peak.

Between June 1998 and December 1999, the largest group competing with Fateh is that of "no one." According to JMCC data, this response peaked at eleven percent in August 1999, when the peace process was at a freeze. Concomitantly, support for both Fateh and Hamas fell by over five percent each. The fluctuation of the unemployment rate, a falling evaluation of Arafat's performance, and a perception of increased corruption in the PA may illustrate a waning support for the current political process.

Support for a specific personality was register in two different forms. The CPRS study asked who someone would elect as president of the PA, whereas the JMCC asked which personality someone trusted most. Options included Arafat, Yassin (figurehead for Hamas), no opinion, and no one, although this last response was not available in the CPRS studies until the December poll of 1995. The JMCC approach of asking which Palestinian figure did one most trust yielded results must the same as the CPRS study.

For the presidency, support for Arafat steadily declined while support for Yassin decreased between November 1994 and March 1995. A major event that occurred during this time was the signing of a formal treaty between Israel and Jordan in October. The Palestinian public may have looked to Jordan to progress their issues, resulting in a decline in support for both Arafat and Yassin.

In May of 1995, however, the opposite is true. Support for Arafat had declined 7.2 percent from its peak one year earlier; a 6.1 percent increase for Yassin followed in

July 1995 over the same period. This may be a result of the Palestinian Authority's crackdown on Islamic Jihad in February, when it used Palestinian police forces to arrest some members of PIJ for armed attacks against Israeli targets (Bickerton, 1998, pp. 302-303). Support for Yassin went down from December 1995 to June 1998. Although Yassin was arrested by Israel in 1991 and later released to Jordan in October 1997, there is no correlation between these dates and public support for him. The downtrend in public support for him may have been caused by a general fear to voice support for Islamic groups as a result of the internal crackdowns.

After identifying which political faction Palestinians supported, the next two questions explored by CPRS dealt with the degree of legitimacy given to both the current political administration and opposition groups. The first is a general question asking the respondent if he will participate in elections. This data was collected from December 1993 until October 1995, only months before the Palestinian legislative elections held on 20 January 1996. A significant majority confirmed that it would participate, averaging at 71.9 percent.

The second question presented a dilemma: "If the opposition called for a boycott of the elections, what would you do?" Responses were to boycott the elections, participate despite the boycott, and unsure. Nearly 60 percent of the replies were to participate in the elections, indicating that the weight given to the electoral process far outweighed that given to the opposition. From December 1994 to December 1995, the support for participation in elections rose fourteen percent, while support for the boycott decreased from 26.6 to only 13.8 percent. Coupled with the preceding data, it is apparent that Palestinians hold the electoral process in high esteem.

The next indicators of support for the existing political structure were the perceived performance of President Arafat and the Palestinian Authority, respectively. Both agencies included these questions in their polls, although the extent to which they did so varied. In the case of charting Arafat's performance, the studies overlapped: JMCC data ranged from April 1996 to March 1999, while CPRS figures start in January 1994 and end October 1999. The data measuring the PA's performance is limited by CPRS to one year, from December 1994 to September 1995, when JMCC picked up the issue from April 1996 through August 1999.

The perception of Arafat's performance elicited similar responses in both studies. A rating of "good" reached its peak in April 1997, followed by a sharp decrease until September 1997, down 18.3 percent in JMCC polls and 15.3 percent in the CPRS polls. The intensification of Israeli settlement policies, particularly on Mount Abu Ghniem (known to Israelis as Har Homa), and Arafat's inability to halt this process explain the downturn (Bickerton, 1998, p. 304). From October 1998 to October 1999, Arafat's "good" appraisal stabilized around 54 percent. Unfortunately, neither study provided data after this date for one to observe public response to Arafat after signing the Wye Memorandum.

The approval rating for effectiveness of the Palestinian Authority has also gradually depreciated over time. CPRS data shows slightly lower percentages and is measured only a year after its institution in December 1994 through September 1995, prior to the legislative elections. This precedes JMCC questioning, which began in April 1996. In April 1997, the PA enjoyed high public sentiment at 71.4 percent, as did Arafat.

Since then, it has steadily decreased fifteen percent, reflected in figures posted in the JMCC poll of August 1999.

Only documented by CPRS, the question of the performance of opposition groups is an interesting one. Responses of "good" and "poor" started off relatively close, at 35.8 percent and 28.2 percent, respectively. Over time the good rating increased while the poor rating decreased, with the maximum separation noted in June 1998. A possible explanation for the positive response is Yassin's activism after being released to Jordan from an Israeli prison in 1997. He immediately met with the Hamas leadership in Amman, and later embarked on a four-month tour ending in June 1998 to strengthen regional support for the movement (Kristiansen, 1999, p. 31). With the conclusion of the tour came a decrease in public opinion for opposition groups, leveling at approximately 33 percent as of October 1999.

The next questions refocus attention on the Palestinian Authority and pertain to corruption. The first issue is whether or not the respondent believes corruption exists in the PA. Averaging 62.2 percent responding "yes," a significant majority perceive deterioration in the institution. Specific peaks occurred in April and June 1999 at over 70 percent, and the lows were registered from September to December 1996, August 1998, and January 1999 at around 50 percent. In each case, the unemployment rate was up. There was also the downtrend of support for Arafat's performance.

When asked if corruption would increase or decrease in the future, most respondents felt it would increase over time. In May 1997 there was a dramatic rise in the group who felt it would increase. A significant decrease followed in October 1998,

with a continuing increase charted in the latest polls. The signing of the Wye Memorandum may attribute to the sentiment that corruption would decrease.

The next issue is another indicator used to determine support for opposition groups. Respondents were asked whether or not they supported armed attacks on Israeli targets. This variable was definitely driven by events of the day. The peak of support in February 1995 followed suicide bombings that resulted in the deaths of 22 Israelis and the internal crackdown on militant opposition groups by the Palestinian Authority. Opposition to the attacks was most significant in December 1996, when unemployment was at a low. The current trend indicates a decline, with Palestinians opposing armed attacks on Israeli targets.

C. FINDINGS

The past six years since the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993 have been a roller-coaster ride of sorts for the peace process. Palestinian public opinion has fluctuated accordingly. Although there is less data available in the early polling years, the questioning becomes more consistent over time and allows for better statistical analysis. This information is used to draw parallels between public opinion and the peace process in order to determine which factors influence popular support for the Palestine Liberation Organization and Hamas. Over time, the relationship of different variables shifted away from an inverse correlation between popular support for the PLO and that for Hamas. When the peace process began, the poll data indicated that backing for one group depended on whether or not the negotiations were on track. As time progressed, more and more respondents began to express the view of "no opinion."

This lack of opinion, whether out of fear or apathy, is especially important because it reveals the general perception that no current political faction has the means to effect real change on the final status for the state of Palestine. A pattern described by CPRS as "tri-polar" is developing amongst the Palestinian electorate. The first group is comprised of DOP supporters, namely those associated with Fateh. The next segment is the DOP opposition groups led by Hamas. "Swing voters" make up the third group and is largely composed of those who are unwilling to commit to one of the other two groups. Neither of the first two has successfully formulated a strategy to elicit the support of the third. If and when the Palestinians secure a state, however, these groups may shift into more solid coalitions, the implications of which will surely pose a challenge to the women's movement.

D. THE FUTURE FOR PALESTINIAN FEMINISTS

There are two viable scenarios that will potentially emerge in Palestine on the political scene. The first is a continuation and extension of power under Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The second is a coalition government wherein Arafat co-opts Hamas for support. Either situation would be confirmed by the Palestinian population through the electoral process. Since implementation, Palestinians have expressed their opinion that elections are the best way to decide who gets into office, thus validating the process through participation. Support for a particular regime translates into votes, which equals an electoral recognition of power.

The lack of opinion on key political issues, as shown in the previous chapter, suggests that Arafat will remain in power regardless of the coalition he forms within the Palestinian government. His popularity ranges between fifty and sixty percent among the

constituents, with no other personality or opposition group close to competing with him for power. The Islamists form the next sizeable minority, but their inability to consolidate beyond factional lines prevents them from threatening Arafat's authority. Hamas could draw support from Islamic independents, but an even more powerful opposition would be in the coalition among the opposition groups, including Hamas, the PFLP, the DFLP, and Islamic Jihad. The difficulty lies in generating enough appeal to cross divisional lines separating these groups.

These scenarios aside, a more probable sequence of events would be Arafat's co-optation of Hamas. Hamas has extensive reach across Palestinian society, catering to the needs to the population through a vast network of mosques, schools, and other social institutions. Unfortunately for them, the group has marginalized itself by its boycott of elections, with candidates from the group running on an independent ticket. Nonetheless, when Hamas decides to participate, it may generate a considerable amount of votes. It will not be enough to unseat Arafat, but it will threaten the balance of power. In turn, Arafat may decide to integrate Hamas into the Palestinian Authority, giving the group more influence in religious and social matters in exchange for their recognition of him as the rightful leader.

Neither scenario holds much promise for the future with respect to the Palestinian women's movement. While the political context prior to and during the Intifada was quite fluid and enabled women to organize, such fluidity has ceased under the self-rule of the Palestinian Authority. Another alarming sign to women is the possible alignment between the Palestinian Authority and Islamist groups. Palestinian women expressed well-founded fears that if the PLO is forced to come to terms with Hamas, a repetition of

the 1989 hijab episode (when women in Gaza were forced to wear the traditional veil) becomes possible. The sentiment is that if the PLO did not defend women during the height of the Intifada, would it be realistic to expect it to act otherwise in a more benign environment? (Abdulhadi, 1998, p. 4). Palestinian women also fear that their leadership may simply emulate laws in force in Jordan once either autonomy or statehood is achieved.

These concerns notwithstanding, it is reasonable to expect that the women's movement in Palestine will fare better than those in the other cases. The reasons are threefold. First, as I have shown, the women in the Occupied Territories have broken through on the educational arena. As Figure 3 shows, in 1995, the gender gap in literacy between men and women had closed significantly over the past twenty years.

Also, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education compiled information on the composition of enrolled students by gender. They found that in the West Bank, there are almost equal levels of men and women enrolled in all educational stages, including higher education, although a gender gap still remains in the Gaza Strip.

Second, the vast network of women's organizations has survived the trials of the Intifada and is still going strong today. In an effort to demonstrate its permanence on the political scene, the movement re-evaluated its goals after Oslo to formulate a more feminist-oriented agenda outside the nationalist struggle for independence. By establishing itself as a concurrent rather than subordinate track to the nationalist movement, the women's struggle has gained public attention and support for the implementation of egalitarian principles upon the foundation of a Palestinian state.

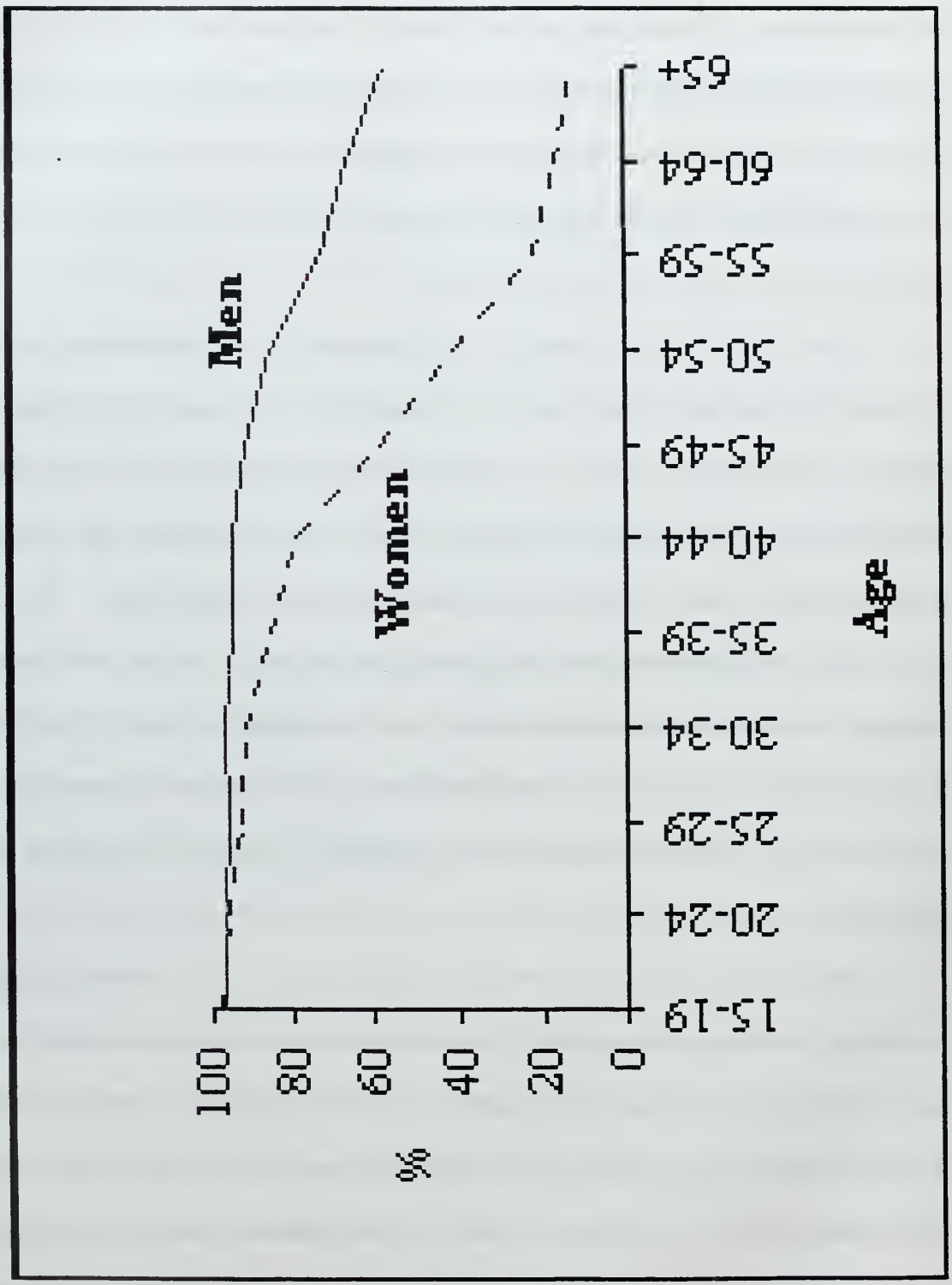

Figure 3: Palestinian Gender Gap, 1995. From Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Finally, Palestinian women have the ability to learn from the past through women's movements in other countries. There have been many conferences and seminars sponsored by the United Nations in an effort to promote interaction among the world's women. Global networking through these meetings allows Palestinian women to discuss their movement with women around the world and to discover what has and has not worked in other nations. This opportunity is tremendous in that it serves to break the pattern I observed in the movements of Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and Jordan. The celebration of International Women's Day provides another example of building supportive vehicles to promote women's rights.

E. CONCLUSIONS

I have learned that the progression of women's movements in the Middle East does in fact follow a logical pattern. It is through the institution of education, particularly in university-level programs, that opens new doors for women. By rapidly expanding the educational opportunities afforded its women, a country concomitantly transforms the values and beliefs of the female population. This in turn encourages women to challenge their place in the existing social order through the formation of socio-political organizations. If these structures develop and consolidate prior to or immediately following a period of regime liberalization, then the movement will more likely initiate positive changes on its behalf. If, however, the regime successfully suppresses or co-opts it, a feminist movement will have difficulty emerging or sustaining.

Palestinian women have been fortunate in that the political environment coincided with the development of socio-political organizations. As I have shown in the cases of Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and Algeria, the timing of these two elements has not been

optimal and as a result, societal changes for women have been slow to come. In Egypt, for example, it was not until February 2000 that a woman gained the right to file for divorce from her husband with or without his consent. Algerian women are not so fortunate; they continue to battle Islamists over their position in society. Currently, under the provisions of the 1984 Family Code, women in Algeria are recognized as minors. This lack of recognized equality hinders the ability of women to meet in a public forum, let alone organize a successful movement.

The future will be a difficult one for Palestinian women, whatever the regime structure. This notwithstanding, they have a strength that prior movements in the region lacked. With careful planning and consideration of the forces at work, the women's movement in Palestine has the potential to set the example for a new feminism in the Middle East. Unlike the others, where the government takes on the responsibilities for its women or a women's movement fails to develop, the Palestinian women can change this cycle—creating an environment that is truly open to social transformation and diversification.

APPENDIX

Statistics by Country

F Enrolled = Total number of females enrolled in schools
(pre-primary + primary + secondary + tertiary/higher)

F Univ = Number of females enrolled in tertiary/higher education institutions

% F Total = Percentage of females enrolled in schools to total female population

% F Univ = Percentage of females enrolled in universities to total female population

F Pop. = Total female population

Egypt	F Enrolled	# F Univ	% F Total	% F Univ	F Pop.
1954	657906	13950	6.8	0.1	9602842
1957	886389	10410	9.2	0.1	11602842
1969	1015509	12079	7.9	0.09	12813049
1969	1129382	13797	8.8	0.12	12813049
1961	1242877	18190	9.7	0.14	12813049
1962	1274261	11814	9.8	0.09	12916089
1963	1424324	28412	11	0.2	12916089
1964	1552394	29264	10.4	0.19	12916089
1965	1661720	36850	11	0.25	14904107
1967	1764578	39029	11.8	0.26	14904107
1969	1816277	40507	12.1	0.27	14900304
1969	1878519	50606	12.6	0.34	14900304
1970	1958104	57901	13.1	0.39	14900304
1971	2061946	66536	13.8	0.45	14900304
1972	2197858	100944	13.8	0.68	14900304
1974	2369300	118853	13.2	0.66	17957276
1975	2475701	136577	13.8	0.76	17957276

Tunisia	F Enrolled	# F Univ	% F Total	% F Univ	F Pop.
1954	76656	381	4.2	0.02	1825309
1966	106184	392	9.8	0.02	1825309
1957	108738	402	6	0.022	1825309
1961	177039	410	9.7	0.021	1825309
1962	175469	447	9.8	0.024	1825309
1969	232636	652	12.7	0.036	1825309
1965	252126	865	11.5	0.036	2189947
1966	255754	1195	11.7	0.055	2189947
1957	304370	1354	13.1	0.061	2218932
1969	351856	1631	15.9	0.073	2218932
1970	386645		17.4		2218932
1971	414958	2501	18.7	0.11	2218932
1974	416855	2330	18.8		2218932
1975	428026	4480	15.9	0.19	2747296
1976	447306	6070	16.3	0.22	2747296
1977	481290	6070	17.5	0.22	2747296

Jordan	F Enrolled	# F Univ	% F Total	% F Univ	F Pop.
1955	75666		11.6		654070
1969	77260		11.8		654070
1957	84400		12.9		654070
1969	91897		14.1		654070
1961	103580		12.4		838629
1962	116560	192	13.9	0.022	838629
1969	127318	184	15.2	0.022	838629
1969	144826		17.3	0.035	838629
1965	159620	556	19	0.066	838629
1969	160090	1026	19.1	0.12	838629
1967	112876	919	13.5	0.11	838629
1969	128764	1046	15.4	0.12	838629
1969	147300	1177	17.6	0.14	838629
1970	161390	1349	19.2	0.16	838629
1971	177223	1624	21.1	0.16	838629
1973	218173	2649	26	0.32	838629
1974	237736	3120	28.3	0.37	838629
1975	355713	3120	30.5	0.37	838629
1976	274328	3120	32.7	0.37	838629

Algeria	F Enrolled	# F Univ	% F Total	% F Univ	F Pop.
1954	191711	1745	4.6	0.04	4120000
1956	185024	1495	4.1	0.03	4535794
1957					4535794
1969	272575		6		4535794
1969	318692		7		4535794
1960	376617	2018	7.5	0.04	5035790
1961	392779		7.8		5035790
1962	343700	570	6.8	0.01	5035790
1963					5978349
1969	515633	1199	8.6	0.02	5978349
1965	562135	1631	9.2	0.027	6088727
1969	582306	1851	9.7	0.031	6004534
1969	649003	2398	10.8	0.04	6004534
1969	770316	3022	12.8	0.05	6004534
1971	881775	5540	14.7	0.09	6004534
1973	1075995	7028	17.9	0.12	6004534
1975	1227949	7028	20.5	0.12	6004534
1976	1352417	12171	22.5	0.2	6004534

Comparative Statistics: Number of females enrolled in school to total female population

%F total	Algeria	Egypt	Jordan	Tunisia
1954	4.6	6.8	11.6	4.2
1955			11.8	
1956	4.1		12.9	5.8
1957		9.2	14.1	6
1958	6	7.9		
1959	7	8.6		
1960	7.5			
1961	7.8	9.7	12.4	9.7
1962	8.6	9.8	13.9	9.6
1963		11	15.2	12.7
1964	8.6	10.3	17.3	11.5
1965	9.2	11	19	11.7
1966	9.7		19.1	13.7
1967		11.8	13.5	15.9
1968	10.8	12.1	15.4	
1969	12.8	12.6	17.6	
1970		13.1	15.2	17.4
1971	14.7	13.9	21.1	18.7
1972		10.8		
1973	17.9		26	
1974		13.2	28.3	18.8
1975	20.5	13.8	30.5	15.6
1976	22.5		32.7	16.3

Comparative Statistics: Number of females enrolled in university to total female population

% F Univ	Algeria	Egypt	Jordan	Tunisia
1954		0.1		0.02
1955				
1956				0.02
1957		0.1		0.022
1958		0.09		
1959		0.12		
1960	0.04			
1961		0.14		0.021
1962	0.04	0.09	0.022	0.024
1963		0.2	0.022	0.039
1964	0.02	0.19	0.035	
1965	0.027	0.25	0.066	0.039
1966	0.031		0.12	0.055
1967		0.26	0.14	0.061
1968	0.04	0.27	0.12	0.073
1969	0.05	0.34	0.14	
1970		0.39	0.16	
1971	0.09	0.45	0.19	0.11
1972		0.68		
1973	0.12		0.32	0.16
1974		0.66	0.37	0.22
1975	0.12	0.76	0.37	0.22

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